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OFFICIAL REVIEW
OF THE GREATER
NORRIS & ROWE

C. I. NORRIS



CIRCUS
1910

H. S. ROWE



H. S. ROWE AND WALTER A. SHANNON
SOLE OWNERS AND MANAGERS



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THIS MONTH'S COVER

The cover of the program of the Greater Norris & Rowe Circus for the season of 1910 is the subject of our cover. It is printed in green, yellow, red and black. The publisher was the I. M. Southern & Co. This firm printed programs during this period for a number of circuses other than Ringling Bros. Forepaugh Sells, Buffalo Bill and Barnum & Bailey.

Like most programs of the period the text of the magazine is mainly a zoology

review of the animal kingdom. One page is devoted to a brief sketch of the Norris & Rowe show. The actual program of the performance is printed on an eight page insert that also includes local ads for five stands. This issue carries ads for the stands in Evansville, Ind., Apr. 15-16; Henderson, Ky., Apr. 18; Princeton, Ky., Apr. 19; Paducah, Ky., Apr. 20 and Hopkinsville, Ky., Apr. 21. The original is from the Pfening Collection.

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If you have changed your address be sure to advise the Bandwagon office of your new address. The Post Office will not forward third class mail, and your copy comes back with a minimum of 8c postage due. It then takes another 8c, or more to forward it on to you. In addition to this extra bother and cost to the CHS you are delayed in receiving your copy.

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2029

George J. Savage
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Scranton, Penna. — 18503

2030

George Prisco, Jr.
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2031

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7926 Flamingto Drive
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2032

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117½ Fourth Street
Baraboo, Wisconsin — 53913

2033

Beth Wellington
21 Sylvan Avenue
West Newton, Mass. — 02165

2034

Harry Lea Kingston
1670 Fairway
Beaumont, Texas — 77703

2035

Albert DeRango
619 Ohio Street
Racine, Wisconsin — 53405

2036

Bro. J. Francis Dolphin, M. M.
Maryknoll Seminary
Maryknoll, New York — 10545

2037

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205 Laurel Avenue
South Pittsburg, Tenn. — 37380

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John Mex Perales
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2039

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Discussion Time — 4,000 Lithographs — Programs
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CIRCUS WORLD MUSEUM
Baraboo, Wisconsin
AUGUST 4 and 5, 1972

Two solid days of circus history will be delivered to the membership this year at Baraboo when the Circus World Museum offers its facilities to the Circus Historical Society. Plans include presentations of papers by competent historians, discussions of knotty circus historical problems, films never before viewed by most of the membership, and a great opportunity to use the facilities of the library.

Bob Parkinson, Chief Librarian and Historian of the Circus World Museum, writes, "If the men want to do some extensive looking at material, I will give them as much time as they want to see as much as they want . . . view as much of the 4,000 litho collection as they wish . . . see as much as they wish to give time . . ."

ARRIVE ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 3

and be prepared for a great start into the fascinating world of circus history on Thursday morning, August 4.

Although presentation of papers and viewing of films will be closely scheduled, there will be time allocated for you to research your favorite circus subject at the library. A special time will be set aside to view the fine collection of old lithographs which some of us viewed after returning from Milwaukee last year. This collection alone is worth the trip to Baraboo.

PLAN TO JOIN US IN BARABOO

Make your reservations now. If you need the names of motels, campgrounds, etc. send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Bob Parkinson and he will send you a folder listing all the places of lodging in the area. Then contact the location of your choice as soon as possible.

AUGUST 4 & 5, 1972
CIRCUS WORLD MUSEUM
BARABOO, WISCONSIN
CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL CONVENTION



THE NORRIS & ROWE SHOW

BY CHANG REYNOLDS

PART ONE

It is a rare occasion when a circus historian finds the opportunity to study a circus that begins its operations at a time of severe financial crisis, grows through the years of economic plenty, and then collapses in the next "panic" that strikes the nation. Yet, the Norris & Rowe Show did just that. In the late 1880s Clarence I. Norris and Andrew C. Norris ventured into theaters with a dog act, encountered a brief circus connection, and then launched their own show in 1894 at a time when the United States was in the grip of a severe financial strain. The brothers' dog and pony operation emerged from this period very successfully. It was so rewarding that they misjudged the times and events, expanded their operation, and lost their organization in bankruptcy court after the 1908 season. This coincided with the "bank panic" of 1907. The circus struggled on for another year and early in May 1910 it collapsed. Three different and separate auctions were called that summer before the property was successfully sold and the creditors satisfied. The details of this series of events from 1888 to 1910 have provided an extremely interesting task of research for this historian who could not have met with any success without the assistance of many Circus Historical Society members and other interested people.

The Norris brothers were born with the name of Cozad in, or near, Cleveland, Ohio. While the author's research did not reveal the birth date of Clarence Cozad, the older brother, Andrew Crosby Cozad was born on January 1, 1863, according to

his death certificate at Santa Cruz, California. The father's name was D. A. Cozad and the mother's maiden name was Crosby. The name of "Norris" was apparently adopted when these two men entered show business and the Cozad name was not used again until 1905 when the Cozad Dog and Pony Show was

This small four page courier was used by the Norris Bros. Dog and Pony show in 1895. It is printed in red and blue. The front cover is pictured here. Pfening Collection.



This letterhead was used by the Norris & Rowe Circus around 1908 or 1910. The title is white outlined in black on a red reverse that is outlined in gold. Other type is in gold of red. It was printed by the Donaldson Litho., Newport, Ky. Pfening Collection.

briefly on the road under their direction.

Hutton S. Rowe was born April 1, 1866 at Decorah, Iowa, and entered show business as a balloon ascensionist and tight rope walker while in his late teens. He apparently first joined with the Norris Bros. Equine & Canine Paradox in 1894 as manager of that operation. This was the two-car show that opened the season in Rochester, New York, and was the outfit that has usually been listed as the first effort of the Norris brothers.

While it may well have been their first attempt to operate a dog and pony show with their own rail equipment, the Norris brothers had been touring for several seasons before that date with their performing animals. Some evidence indicates that at times they each operated a dog and pony show; at other times they combined their efforts.

The earliest stands thus far located for this exhibit of trained dogs were discovered by Mike Sporrer of Redmond, Washington. He has forwarded newspaper accounts which indicate that the Norris outfit played Portland, Oregon (New Park Theater); Astoria, Oregon; Tacoma, Washington (Alpha Hall); Seattle, Washington (Fry's Opera House); and Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. These towns were played on

Fridays and Saturdays from the last of August through the end of September, 1888. Usually two performances were given on each date with a variety of dogs - some two dozen in number - while a contortionist was used between the two parts of the dog show. The canines were paraded in the morning before the afternoon performance and the entire show was billed "Prof. Norris' Trained Dogs." Although the name "canine parodox" was used in the newspaper articles describing the performance it was not used in the title.

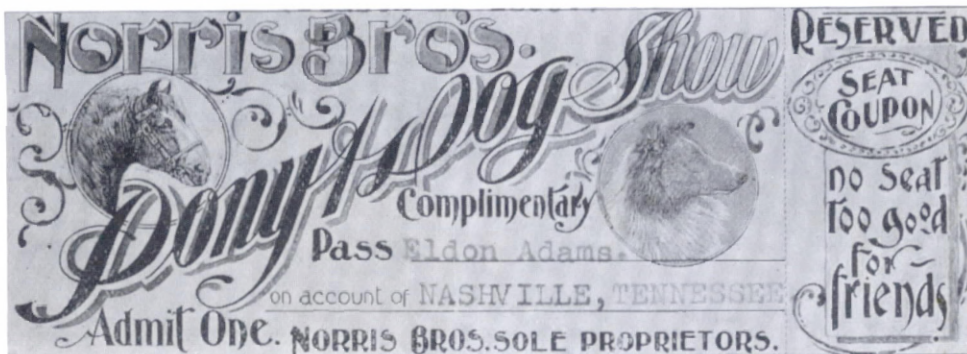
During the show the canines climbed ladders, leaped over bars, waltzed on their rear legs, picked out letters and figures on blocks, and "clowned." Many papers mentioned one dog that "performed the wonderful feat of looking at a boy's watch in the audience and then, after going upon the stage, told the time it indicated by picking out figures on blocks." Another quote indicates the capabilities of Prof. Norris. "His system of advertising is a new and novel one, and it is wonderful to see the control he has over them (the dogs) when parading the streets." Prices of admission were 25 and 50 cents; children 25 cents.

While it cannot be stated for certain which brother was working the dog act in the Northwest in 1888, it might be assumed that it was Andrew Norris since the research indicates that he often used the title "Professor," and it also reveals that he was generally regarded as the more skilled trainer of the two men.

Only one date for 1889 has been located and that was for Provo, Utah, on March 4. Bob Taber is the source of this information.

In 1890, Prof. Norris and his canines played Texas dates in March. He was on the bill at Austin, March 14-15 and at San Antonio, March 26-27.

In 1891, Andrew Norris was associated with the Willie Sells Show for part of the season. He suffered much the same experience that Charles Andrews had encountered with Willie Sells, and his father, Allen, the year before. A brief account of the dramatic conclusion of the season reveals that the Sells Show was stranded in Topeka, Kansas, October 12-13, 1891, and Col. W. A. Sells (Allen) was about to send it to Kansas City to join another outfit. Upon union the combination would be transferred swiftly to Texas. The employees heard of the plans, hired a lawyer, and a summons was served upon the passenger agent of the railroad company that had charge of the show property. The purpose of this action was, of course, to ensure that the employees would obtain some of the salary due them. Meanwhile, the circus train had left the Rock Island depot in South Topeka. However, it was flagged down and held at North Topeka as it attempted to depart the city. At this time, Andrew Norris, an associate of Sells, announced that he did not have a dollar left. He had put all of his money into the show and, although the



This reserve seat pass was issued by the Norris show in 1899, it is printed in brown ink. Pfening Collection.

circus had made money all along (so claimed Norris), most of it was paid over to Colonel Allen Sells.

After this experience with Sells, Prof. Norris returned to vaudeville with his dog act. It played the Tremont Opera House in Galveston, Texas, in early March 1892, while at Houston, Texas, on March 11-12, it was listed for the first time as a "brother act." The title was "Norris Bros.' Equine Paradox." Also, this was the initial indication that ponies were being used. Later in the month, Prof. Norris' Canine Paradox played at Fort Worth and Dallas, and in July, using the same title, made a six-day stand at Joplin, Missouri. Thus far, no dates or descriptions of the Norris brothers activities for 1893 have been discovered but it can be assumed that their vaudeville operations continued.

In spite of the depressed state of affairs of the nation in the mid-1890s it is remarkable that the Norris brothers and H. S. Rowe combined to put out their first railroad show in 1894. Admittedly, it was a two-car affair with limited personnel and the two cars were of small size - one thirty feet and the other thirty-five feet long.

One of the wagons built by the Studebaker Bros. Carriage and Wagon Co., of South Bend, Indiana, is pictured. The photo was taken at the factory in February 1898. Burt Wilson Collection.

The stock numbered fifty Shetland ponies, dogs and monkeys while the performance was presented under a 100 ft. round top. The season opened in Rochester, New York. A letter from Dr. Charles F. Watson (The Forum, Billboard, May 2, 1936, p. 27) contains the names of the nine-piece band. Watson was the leader, played cornet, and continued in that position, he reported, for about five years. His information is verified by the comments on the reverse of a photo in the Hertzberg Collection, presented by William Madison Scott of Reynoldsville, Pa. Scott, later a rube clown with Hagenbeck-Wallace, John Robinson, and other circuses, was the bass drummer on the 1894 Norris Bros. Equine and Canine Paradox according to Watson. As indicated above, this was the first year that Hutton S. Rowe was connected with the Norris brothers. He was manager of this two-car show and remained with the concern until the brothers were gone and he alone owned and directed it.

The operation during that first year on rails was successful enough to enable the proprietors to add another car for the 1895 season. A photo taken by Scott (now in the Hertzberg Collection) in 1895 indicates some growth. It shows a ten-piece band, including the leader, Watson. About three dozen people, including the musicians, are shown in the photo. Also included are horses, ponies, monkeys, more than thirty dogs, and a goat.

According to one report a fourth car was added in 1896, but most sources limit the show to two or three cars before 1900.



Norris Bros.' Peerless Dog and Pony Show spent the winter of 1898-1899 in quarters at San Pedro Park, San Antonio, Texas, and made an early start for the west coast to begin a spring tour. It should be mentioned at this time that routes of the Norris Bros.' shows and the Norris & Rowe Circus are difficult to obtain. Dates seldom appeared in either *Billboard* or *Clipper*. The writer has been fortunate to have had the assistance of Mike Sporrer working on the routes in the Northwest, and the opportunity to visit California cities to dig out the show dates with which to amplify the sparse listings in the trade papers. Richard Conover furnished many dates from the Grace route records; others were located in the files of the Circus World Museum Library and the Hertzberg Collection at the San Antonio Library.

A few dates noted in March 1898 in Southern California are Redlands, March 10; Riverside, March 14; Los Angeles, March 21-26; and Pasadena, March 29-30. In the last town named the show was presented at the corner of Union and Raymond Avenue. The parade "was headed by an excellent band; following the band was a long line of ponies, some of them with dogs and monkeys mounted on their backs. Then came a miniature fire department, police patrol wagon and other similar vehicles, drawn by diminutive pon-

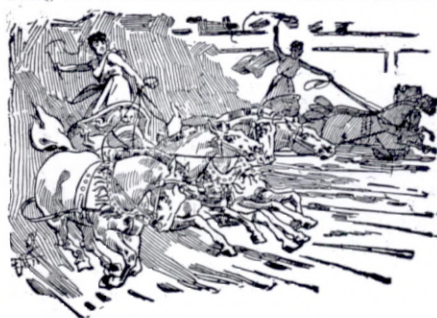
EXTRA! EXTRA!! EXTRA!!!

Norris & Rowe's BIG Trained Animal Shows

Oldest, Largest, Richest & Best Institution of the kind in the World

WILL EXHIBIT IN ASHLAND WED., MAY 28

Two Performances, at 2 and 8 p. m.
Tents, Corner of Second Street and Tenth Avenue W.



SEE The Great Triple Baby Elephant Act.
The Only Performing Camels.
The World's Greatest Riding Lions.
The \$10,000 School of Educated Seals.
The Ludicrous-Acting Monkeys.

500---PERFORMING ANIMALS---500

Every Act a Feature—Every Feature New

30---FUNNY CLOWNS---30

Royal Roman Hippodrome Costly Zoological Congress
and Educational Museum.

Watch for the New, Novel Street Parade at 11 A. M.
A Marvel of Processional Wealth.
POPULAR PRICES. 1902

Fun for the Little Folks

HE WHO MAKES CHILDREN LAUGH, BEST PLEASES ALL

Norris & Rowe's BIG TRAINED ANIMAL SHOWS

Mark a epoch in the annals of the arena. They are absolutely perfect. Entirely alone in a class of their own.

Everything Just as Represented

WE ADVISE FACTS NOT FANCIES.

Norris & Rowe's BIG TRAINED ANIMAL SHOWS

Novelty, Excellence, Originality and Progressiveness of HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE STRIKING CHARACTERISTICS OF

Norris & Rowe's BIG TRAINED ANIMAL SHOWS

A PARAGON OF

•• Absolute Perfection in Popular Recreation ••

Norris and Rowe's Big Double Shows.

POSITIVELY THE GREATEST WONDER OF EDUCATED ANIMALS IN THE WORLD.

ABSOLUTELY Clean, Wholesome, Moral and Instructive.

THE ONLY ACTOR WHO IS NOT A MONKEY, DOG, OR PONY.

THE ONLY ACTOR WHO IS NOT A MONKEY, DOG, OR PONY.

Cutest, - Canniest, - Bonniest Beasts

THE ONLY ACTOR WHO IS NOT A MONKEY, DOG, OR PONY.

THE ONLY ACTOR WHO IS NOT A MONKEY, DOG, OR PONY.

THE ONLY ACTOR WHO IS NOT A MONKEY, DOG, OR PONY.

THE ONLY ACTOR WHO IS NOT A MONKEY, DOG, OR PONY.

The show issued this four page two color courier in 1901. It carries the title Norris & Rowe Big Trained Animal Shows. The center two page spread is reproduced here. It is printed in red and blue. Pfening Collection.

ies and manned by dogs and monkeys. After these were several chariots containing dogs of different breeds, and finally, in the rear, was a milk-white pony riding in a golden chariot."

The show traveled slowly through the San Joaquin Valley and into the bay area where a long stand was opened in San Francisco on May 8. This lasted through the 18th and then the outfit moved on to the northern part of the state and into Oregon. It reached Portland on June 20 and played through Saturday, the 25th. In order to give some idea of the ability of the Norris brothers as trainers a description of the 1898 program is presented. Part of it, the reader will note, retained acts featured ten years earlier but some were amplified and others were entirely new. The program opened with a drill given by two Shetland ponies. The leader, then rang a bell to call in additional members of the troupe, which, after a roll call, went through various evolutions. The leader of the pony troupe then solved several problems in addition and subtraction by pawing the correct answer on the ground. One pony leaped over three others and a pyramid was formed out of dogs and ponies; "Snowflake," the pure-white Shetland, occupying a hazardous position at the top from which he descended backward down a flight of stairs without assistance.

The dogs jumped the rope, leaped through rings of fire, said "prayers," turned backward somersaults, walked a tight-rope, and one greyhound jumped

Another style newspaper ad was used in Ashland, Wisconsin, for the May 28, 1902 stand. Circus World Museum Collection.

over eight ponies, while another leaped over a table, a barrel, and a ladder, stacked one on top of the other. In another act a dog stole a piece of steak and was led to jail by a monkey dressed as a policeman who had arrived in a patrol wagon. Another scene featured a family of dogs riding in a fine carriage drawn by greyhounds with a monkey as a coachman. Still another humorous piece depicted a trainer dressed as a farmer who worked the trained goat.

The most elaborate, best-advertised, and crowd-pleasing act on the program was the work of the animal fire department, which consisted of a hook and ladder truck, and a hose wagon, drawn by ponies with dogs and monkeys as firemen. These vehicles entered the ring at full speed to answer the call to save a burning house. The dogs of the hook and ladder company ascended ladders to the second story of the house and carried out several small canines and household effects. Meanwhile, the hose wagon arrived and a monkey, hose in hand, rushed into the building and extinguished the fire. This last exhibition deservedly received a great deal of space in the newspapers and must rank with some of the finest acts of animal training ever presented to the public.

From Portland, the show moved to Washington and played Olympia (June 29); Tacoma (June 30-July 2); and Seattle (July 5-9). Business was great at all stands and the tent was filled at each performance. In Seattle, the parade was given each morning during the week.

On July 10 the show made a Sunday run to Vancouver, B.C., where it played for three days. On the 14th it was enroute to Victoria, B.C. where it gave performances on Friday, Saturday, Monday and Tuesday. It returned to the United States and the next week and played Snohomish on the way to Spokane, in which city it remained for an entire week. Unfortunately,



to this writing, no further information on the 1898 tour has been discovered.

The 1899 season, as far as can be determined, opened on March 1 at Redlands, California. The usual cities in the southern part of the state were played as the Norris Bros.' Big Trained Animal Show moved north to Bakersfield (March 20) and, after the tour of the valleys and bay area of central California, reached Portland, Oregon, on May 15. Here it remained a week. The program for this season was similar to the 1898 edition with two notable exceptions - introduced were "Fargo," the smallest performing elephant in America, and Ajax, the only educated zebra in the world."

The show opened with a grand dress parade, in which all the animals connected with the show took part. The pyramid was formed with "Snowflake," the white pony at the peak, and "Fargo" immediately beneath. Then came the circles of dogs and ponies. All animals were diminished and Prof. Norris called attention to the pony's ability to descend backward down the stairs. The dog acts and pony drills followed with much the same characteristics of the acts of the year before. The trained goat, "Archibald", walked the tight-rope with a monkey on his back; rode horseback (the pony going around the ring at a gallop while the goat jumped on and off without the pony being stopped). Another new feature was the use of a bucking pony which the local boys were urged to ride with no success. Of course, the animal fire department was still the principal act of the performance and drew much comment.

Pullman, Washington, was played on May 30 and the dates in Spokane were June 2, 3, 5 and 6. Here the Norris Bros. show day and dated Prof. George Bartholomew's Equine Extravagation which was showing in town all week. Snohomish was played on the route to Seattle where the show was scheduled for a lengthy stay, June 9-15. This stand al-

The nineteen piece band and the performing personnel of the Norris & Rowe show were grouped for this 1902 photo. Woodcock Collection.

most proved to be a permanent one as events worked out.

About fifteen years earlier Andrew Norris had been married and his wife, Mrs. Anna Cozad, became Mrs. Blanche Norris in the show profession. This event occurred during the period when Andrew and Clarence Norris were operating separate dog shows. After the birth of a son to Andrew and Blanche Norris, the husband apparently transferred to his wife one-half interest in the combined show in order that she would be provided for in case of accident to him. Andrew and his wife separated and, after obtaining a divorce in 1896, Blanche Norris demanded her share of the show property. She was refused any interest in the business since, Andrew reported, Clarence had become the sole owner and later, H.S. Rowe had obtained a third interest. Mrs. Norris obtained a judgment in the Ohio courts but in the meantime the property had been removed from that state and the decree had no value. However, she instituted legal proceedings in Seattle on June 15, 1899, and requested the judge to hold the show in that city until her claim was settled. The jurist gave the show permission to move to Tacoma (the next stand) but required Clarence and Andrew Norris and H.S. Rowe to file a \$25,000 bond in Federal Court. If this was not done a receiver would be appointed since the judge felt that the showmen had not treated Mrs. Norris with any consideration.

Also complicating matters, although not in a legal sense, was the advent of Ringling Brothers' World's Greatest Show into the Northwest. In its first tour of that

This newspaper ad was used in Wausau, Wisconsin for the June 2, 1902 stand. Circus World Museum Collection.

region this big circus had crossed from Utah into Idaho and Oregon during the first two weeks of June. It played Tacoma on the 15th, the day before Norris & Rowe opened its four-day stand in that town. The Big Show played Seattle the day after "The Pride of the West" left town. As Norris & Rowe toured into British Columbia, the Ringling outfit headed for eastern Washington and Montana. Some of the dates played by Norris & Rowe in British Columbia were Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, New Westminster, Ashcroft, Kamloops, and Revelstoke as the show headed east.

The organization opened the 1900 season with a sixteen-day stand in San Francisco beginning on March 3. It followed this with a tour of the central and northern sections of the Golden State and was in Salem, Oregon, by May 11. The stand at Portland occupied the week of May 14-19 and Astoria was played the following Monday. Dates in Washington came next and included Centralia, Aberdeen, Olympia, and Tacoma. Seattle patrons were able to visit the show for seven days, Monday through Sunday, May 28 - June 3, and did so in thousands. Turn-aways came often that week according to

EXTRA FIRST BIG SHOW EXTRA NORRIS & ROWE'S BIG TRAINED ANIMAL SHOWS

The Oldest, Largest, Richest and Best Amusement Institution of its Kind in the World.

FOUNDED IN 1884.

500 PERFORMING 500 .. ANIMALS ..

30-Funny Clowns-30
See The Elephant Band.



DON'T MISS THE BIG
Grand Street Parade
AT 11:00 A. M.
ONE MILE IN LENGTH.

10-BIG NOVEL SHOWS UNITED-10
SEE
The Great Triple Baby Elephant Act,
The Only Performing Camel,
The World's Greatest Riding Lions,
The \$10,000.00 School of Educated Seals,
The Luscious Acting Monkeys.

Every Act a Feature; Every Feature New.
WILL EXHIBIT IN WAUSAU

Monday, June 2nd

PERFORMANCES AT 2 AND 8 P. M.

Royal Roman Hippodrome!
Costly Zoological Congress!
Educational Museum!

TENTS LOCATED AT WEILE'S PARK.
PRICES--Adults 25 cents; Children 15 cents.

Seattle news reports. By June 8, Norris & Rowe's Big Trained Animal Show was in Vancouver for two days and on June 11-12 played Victoria, B.C. Nanaimo was the stand for June 13. It arrived in Spokane to exhibit on Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday, June 16, 18, and 19. The day before its arrival the Great Syndicate Shows played a date in Spokane. At the end of the month the Norris & Rowe Show was playing Missoula, Phillipsburg, and Butte (two days), Montana. On July 2 it reached Anaconda and was east of the Rocky Mountains until late fall. It returned to California in late November - Redlands, Nov. 21; Los Angeles, 26-29; Pasadena, 30; and went into quarters at Oakland.

The parade included nearly seventy Shetland ponies; approximately one hundred dogs; "Fargo" (with a howdah in which rode several poodles) and the two other elephants; "Alexis," the zebra; "Archibald," the goat; and twenty-five miniature vehicles including chariots, tableaux, and cages. One source has reported fourteen cages on the show this season. Major Mite, attired in an English hunting suit, rode a pony in the parade, and George Setler drove a tandem of white Shetlands. The procession was headed by a fine band. According to news reports the parade was attractive, neat, and the use of "rich regalia and costly trappings" made it a grand sight. The circus enthusiasts of the Northwest turned

Washington. It played Tacoma on June 1, three days before the California-based outfit moved into that town, for example.

The Portland dates were June 10-15 and then "The Pride of the West" moved to eastern Washington to make stands at Spokane, Newport, Colville, and Wardner and Wallace in Idaho. On July 9-10 it was in Butte, Montana. Scattered dates throughout the rest of the season indicate that it played the week of August 5-10 at Minneapolis, and followed with a stand at St. Paul. The second week of September was spent in Kansas City and Topeka followed. By the middle of October it had returned to California with dates at Redlands, Riverside, and Pasadena. It made stands through the San Joaquin Valley on its return to quarters in Oakland.

There was not a great deal of change in the type and quality of the performance from the previous season. Prof. Woodruff's sea lion act, George Setler's dancing elephants, and Prof. E. C. Warner's troupe of educated pigs were featured. The bucking pony, the trained goat, the performing zebra, all the dog and pony acts, as well as the sacred ox were presented while the monkey, dog, and pony contingent, and animal fire department climaxed the performance. Other than the trainers, the only people who had appeared in the performance were clowns.

In addition to the monkeys, baboons and a chimpanzee were listed as acts with the show. The Redlands, California, *Daily Facts* indicates that it had been enlarged by a sixth car. Whether this addition was accomplished during the season, or at the beginning, has not been discovered. Greyhound tandem races, five-pony tandem races, and chariot races were also included.

In Pasadena, the audience was appreciative of the fact that the tents could withstand rain. Over three inches had fallen by the afternoon of October 26, but "the rain did not interfere as largely as might have been expected as the tents are genuinely waterproof," reported the *Daily Star*.

Written accounts of the parade given by Norris & Rowe during these years include statements of "glittering chariots, handsomely carved cages and tableaux wagons." Unfortunately no photographs have been located which definitely pinpoint these pieces of equipment to the turn of the century. This writer suspects that they were miniature designs of the larger vehicles used on other circuses since diminutive adjectives were so often used in the descriptions of the parade. Apparently the Norris brothers and H.S. Rowe, at this time, geared the show's equipment to small size; there is no evidence otherwise. It was not until later that the decision was made to enlarge and become a full-size, big-time outfit. Unfortunately, this step coincided with the depressed years after 1905 which contributed to the end of the circus operation.

The 1902 season was marked by the intensification of opposition in the North-



The title had been changed in 1900 by adding Rowe's name while the train had been increased from three cars late in the season by adding a fourth 60 ft. flat car. Two additional "punk" elephants had been purchased and the herd was now composed of "Fargo," "Duke," (Duchess), and "Hero." They were worked by George Setler. Also included in the list of new animals were pigs, anteaters, raccoons, sea lions, and a Bos Indicus. All these animals were trained with the exception of the anteaters which possibly were used in an act but scarcely could be labeled as "trained." Another new feature, used in the concert, was Major Mite, "smallest comedian in existence." The Major was listed as twenty-three years old, twenty-five pounds in weight, and thirty-one inches in height. He hailed from England and with him came Anna Newton who later became Mrs. Hutton S. Rowe. The sea lion act was billed heavily and was represented as having been featured for the past two seasons on the Forepaugh-Sells Circus. The dog and monkey fire department was still the big production of the performance.

The Marvelous Belfords were featured in a special litho used in 1904 and 1905 by the Norris & Rowe Show. Circus World Museum Collection.

out in huge numbers to witness the performance as indicated by accounts in Portland, Tacoma, Seattle, and Spokane newspapers.

In 1901, Norris & Rowe's Big Trained Animal Show opened the season at Mechanics' Pavilion, San Francisco, with a sixteen-day stand beginning March 2. Oakland, Berkeley, and Alameda were played on March 20, 21, and 22. The next month was spent in the central part of the state - some of the dates being Stockton, Lodi, Ione, Placerville, Vallejo, St. Helena, Napa, and Sacramento. On May 1 the run to the north began with stands at Marysville, Oroville, Chico, and Red Bluff. The show played Seattle, Washington, for six days on May 27-June 1, and then moved to Everett where it day-and-night dated a Gentry Bros. unit. This Gentry Bros. dog and pony outfit was very similar to the Norris & Rowe Show in design and was providing opposition in most stands in

west. Norris & Rowe's Big Show day and dated the Pan-American Shows (formerly Lemen Bros. Circus) on Monday, April 28 in Portland, Oregon. The Pan-American opened its season in Portland and Norris & Rowe came in for dates on April 28, 29, and 30. Both shows were buried in torrents of rain on the 28th, but attendance was large in spite of the downpour. In Seattle, May 1, 2 and 3 the Norris & Rowe show was head of the Gentry show which was scheduled for Wednesday, the 7th. However, a hot box, while en route from Portland, delayed the arrival of Norris & Rowe on May 1 so that both afternoon and evening performances were cancelled. The street parade was given in spite of the late arrival and was made from the unloading area to the show grounds. To compensate for the lost day, the show remained in Seattle through the 4th of May. From Seattle, it moved to Roslyn, Ellensburg, North Yakima, and Spokane. "WAIT" paper greeted its arrival in Spokane since the Gentry outfit was scheduled there on May 14, four days later. On the 8th, the show played its North Yakima date, loaded at 11:30 P.M. and made the run of 236 miles in time to give an afternoon performance at Spokane on the 9th.

Norris & Rowe's Big Show moved to Montana the following week and played Missoula, Helena, Bozeman, Livingston, and Billings. From May 20 through the 23rd it made stands at Jamestown, Valley City, Fargo, North Dakota, and Brainerd, Minnesota. Duluth occupied two days (May 26-27) and Ashland, Wisconsin followed on the 28th. Eau Claire was the May 30 date. The show made stands at Wausau, Appleton, Green Bay, Oconto, Marinette (all Wisconsin) and Menominee, Michigan from June 2-7.

In July it moved into Ontario, Canada and, after daily stands, played a week at Toronto. Another week of daily stands at Varne, Orillia, Lindsay, and Kingston (Ontario) and Ottawa, Quebec, preceded a stand of a week's duration at Montreal. The towns of Quebec, Three Rivers, Joliette, St. Johns (all Quebec) were played before the show entered Vermont on August 8. Here it played Burlington and Rutland.

The next week was occupied with dates in Albany, N.Y., Pittsfield and Springfield, Massachusetts, and Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport, Connecticut. Trenton, New Jersey opened the week of August 18 and a lot at Alexandria, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C., was played for three days during the middle of the week. The remaining days of August and September were occupied with the southern area; notable stands being at Petersburg, Norfolk, (Virginia), Charlotte, (North Carolina), Atlanta, Rome and Dalton, Georgia; Chattanooga, Nashville, and Memphis, Tennessee.

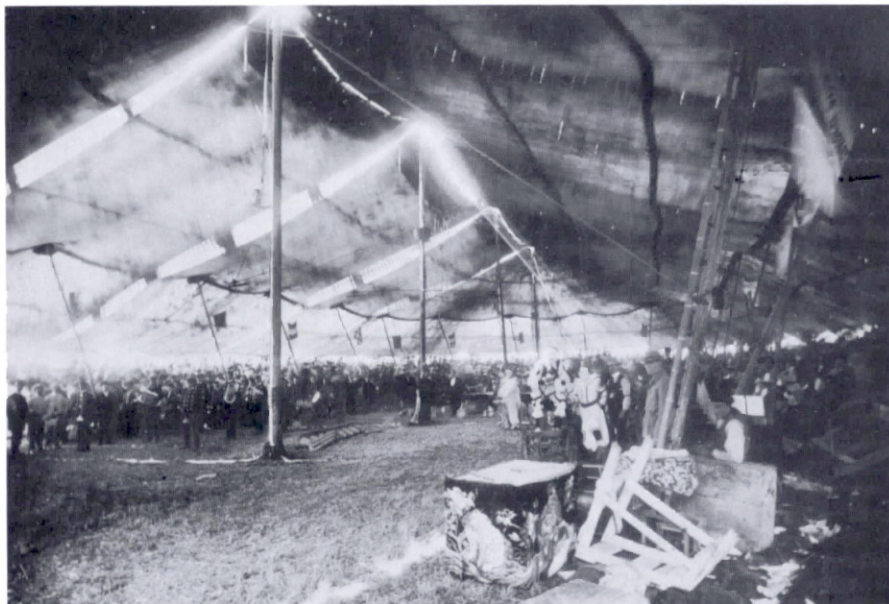
The Norris & Rowe show returned to California early in November and made stands at San Bernardino, Riverside, Redlands, Pomona, Los Angeles (six

days), and San Diego. Before its return to the Golden State, the show had been detained in Tucson, Arizona, because of a washout on the Maricopa, Phoenix and Salt River Railroad. All stands were lost on the Santa Fe over which the show was scheduled to travel, and, since the Southern Pacific had to be used as a replacement route, five towns were played without any advertising except a few handbills and the parade. The rains continued in Southern California and water flooding Los Angeles caused the loss of the afternoon performance on November 10.

Since the railroad route along the Pacific coast between Ventura and Templeton had been completed and opened to traffic, the Norris & Rowe

riages and tableaux, and the "Millionaire Midget Menagerie."

The *New York Clipper* reported in the spring of 1902 that Sullivan & Eagle Company was building a calliope for the show. Except for this inconclusive bit of information, no evidence has been disclosed as to the source of the vehicles used by Norris & Rowe in these early years. Whether this calliope ever reached the circus is in doubt. That some wagon building was necessary is disclosed by the fact that the *Clipper* also reported that spring that the show had suffered "three wrecks, one of which damaged two cars and smashed seven wagons." In all probability wagon building and wagon repair was performed in shops near San Fran-



This view, taken in 1904, shows a full house inside the bigtop. The top had four middles, with two rings and two stages. Pfening Collection.

Show played stands in mid-coastal towns for the first time in 1902. The San Luis Obispo date was Nov. 28, the day after Thanksgiving Day. The show selected a new winter home and went into quarters at San Jose.

The show had been enlarged for the season of 1902 and according to some reports was on six cars. However, Isaac Marck's notes indicate a five-car show at Pittsfield, Mass., on August 12. The sixth car must have been the advance. Ed. C. Warner was the manager of the car with a dozen billposters, lithographers, etc., accompanying him.

Added to the performance were trained Siberian camels, "Ben Hur" and "Said," llamas, and lions which rode horseback in the arena. Also, for the first time, people (other than the trainers and clowns) were included in the performance. This was a troupe of juveniles that blended with the theme of baby elephants, miniature car-

cisco and Sacramento, or by the show itself.

Ed C. Warner and his crew left the San Jose quarters on February 16, 1903, to begin their activities for the season. The Norris & Rowe's Big Shows opened the tenting season in San Jose on February 26. It did not return from its tour until December, a tenting season of nine months and six days. A trip to Southern California, where it was greeted by rain, was made early in March, and then the show spent a week in San Joaquin Valley towns (Bakersfield, Porterville, Visalia, Hanford, Selma, and Fresno) on its way north. Sonora, Stockton (two days), Martiniz, Berkeley, and Alameda were played before a three-day stand at Oakland. Over a dozen cities in the San Francisco Bay region were engaged before the show ran over the Sierras to play Virginia City, Carson City, and Reno, Nevada. On the return trip several of the old gold-mining towns of the Sierras were played and then the move to the Northwest began. The usual Oregon towns in the Willamette Valley received stands and Portland was a four-day date on May 20-23. Astoria, Oregon; and Centralia,



Hoquiam, Olympia, and Tacoma (two days) followed. These Washington stands preceded the week-long stay in Seattle. Ballard (a Seattle suburb), Snohomish, Everett, and Blaine, Washington were played before moving into British Columbia for the yearly engagements in that province. New Westminster, B.C. was the June 17 date, and the Norris & Rowe Show turned back into Washington for a week which brought it to Spokane on the 26th and 27th.

A mixture of Washington and Idaho stands brought the show to Athens, Pendleton, La Grande, Baker City, and Weiser, Oregon. This occurred Monday through Friday, July 6-10. From Weiser the show moved to Boise, Idaho, for the Saturday stand. Dates in Utah, a return to Idaho; and two weeks in Montana followed. The show played a full week in Denver, August 17-22, and added Cripple Creek, Victor, Colorado Springs, and Boulder, before turning east to Nebraska on the night of August 28.

Eleven towns were played in the Cornhusker State and eight in its neighbor to the south, Kansas. Several towns in Oklahoma and Indian Territory were next on the route and then came the Lone Star state with nearly two weeks of dates.

Norris & Rowe Big Shows ended the 1903 tour by making four New Mexico stands and El Paso; fourteen Arizona dates; and finished the season in California after moving into the Golden State at Needles, the November 7 stand. Seven dates were played before it arrived in Los Angeles for its second extended exhibition of the year (five days). The return to San Jose was made through the coastal cities. It will be noted that this long season was accomplished without leaving the western states. The previous season the outfit had moved as far east as Vermont and Quebec and toured from coast to coast in a fewer number of days. Either route was profitable to Andrew and Clarence Norris and Hutton S. Rowe. Theirs was a popular show, well received in all states, and financially successful at this time. The 1903 season marked a significant departure from the format of its usual perfor-

mance, however. Although the animal acts were continued - performing Siberian camels, trained llamas, the three dancing elephants, the sea lion act, and buffaloes - several other acts were added. They consisted of a cycle whirl, bicycle experts, acrobats, aerialists, contortionists and Japanese performers. The trapeze act was composed of the Edwards, a man and wife team. The Royal Matsuda Troupe was the

This Sullivan & Eagle shell band chariot was reported to have been used in 1904. A note on the back of the photo, writer unknown, states "This is the band team of eight that I broke in 1900. One died and six were used the next year." There is a real question if it was actually on the show. Pfening Collection.

Japanese acrobatic act, and the Marco Bros., contortionists, and Charles Chester, equilibrist, were also on the program. Walter Shannon had increased his side-show exhibits by adding some pythons and Frank Hall with his untameable lion, "Hannibal." Prof. Rumley's sea lion act; "Fargo," "Hero," and "Duke", the three elephants; and a baby camel, born in Oakland, received strong billing. Some one hundred Shetland ponies and sixty or seventy dogs were still featured in the parade and used in the performance. "Archibald," the trained goat was still with the show.

Significant events of the 1903 touring season were numerous. President Roosevelt visited Portland on May 21 and drew huge crowds. This counter-attraction had some effect on the afternoon show in all probability, but the night house was well attended. For the most part, opposition did not play as large a role in the tour of the Northwest as it had in previous seasons. However, The Great Sells & Downs United Shows played Idaho Falls about three weeks before the Norris & Rowe Show arrived and Ringling Bros. Circus came into that city about three weeks later. The Monday after the Idaho Falls date, which was Saturday, July 20, the Norris & Rowe Show arrived in Butte,

This newspaper ad for the July 27, 1905 date at Guelph, Ontario, Canada listed all of the acts featured by the show. Riders included Rose Dockrill, Dolly Miller, Estelle Settler, George Holland, Frank Miller, Austin King, Jos. Lyons, Herbert Rumley and William Dutton. Other acts listed were Seven Belfords, Flying Victorellas, Aerial Weavers, Flying Banwards, Gardner Family, McDonald Trio and two Japanese troupes. Walt Tyson Collection.

The ONLY CIRCUS COMING TO GUELPH.

Thursday, JULY 27,

NORRIS & ROWE'S NEW BIG SHOWS

CIRCUS MENAGERIE MUSEUM HIPPODROME
JUST TWICE LARGER THAN EVER BEFORE
2-RINGS ELEVATED STAGE RINGS-2
A NEW CIRCUS THROUGHOUT



A Multitude of New Features Never Before Presented in America

Race-Back Riders	Acrobats, Gymnasts Mid-air Performers	Trained Animal Acts
Rose Dockrill Dolly Miller Estelle Settler M'He Julien George Holland Frank Miller Austin King Jos. Lyons Herbert Rumley Wm. Dutton	Seven Marvelous Belfords Melotte, LaNoie & Melotte Flying Victorellas Troupe Daring Aerial Weavers Five Flying Banwards Famous Gardner Family Graciel McDonald Trio Seven Kintomons Japanese Six Suginoto Japanese Lady Swords women & Fencers	Herd of Elephants Congress of Seals Camels, Llamas, Dromedaries Broken to Harness Fierce Siberian Bears Cake-Walking Stallions One Hundred Shetland Ponies Poey Ballet & Drill Trained Pelicans & Pigs

100 Circus Champions & Celebrities 100
HUGE ROMAN HIPPODROME
All Kinds of Exciting, Thrilling, Real Races and Tests of Skill

20 JOLLY JESTING CLOWNS 20
Headed by "Cheerful Jim" West, "Happy Billy" La Rue, The Gracious Olipson - Tote Duckrow - "Fanny Bill" Scott.

MILLION DOLLAR MENAGERIE
An Imperial Collection of Rare Wild Beasts

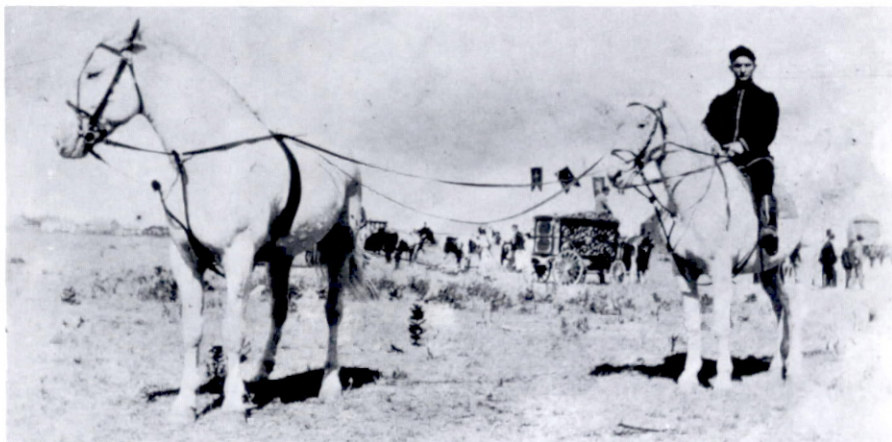
Biggest and Best of All Features of Every Kind
GRAND GOLD GLITTERING STREET PARADE
Will Leave the Show Grounds Every Morning at 10:30
Adults, 50c. Children, 25. One Ticket Admits You to Every thing

Montana, one day ahead of the Campbell Bros. Circus. In late August and early September the west coast outfit ran into the Gollmar Bros. Circus in Colorado and Nebraska. It was a paper war between the advance crews for the most part; the nearest the two shows came to dating each other was at Wahoo, Nebraska which Gollmar played on August 29. Norris & Rowe arrived there on September 7.

Disaster struck at Red Lodge, Montana, on August 2, when a terrific windstorm blew the tops down. A few animals were injured and about sixty-five head of ponies disappeared temporarily into the countryside when the horse top collapsed. They were collected within a few hours. Geary, Oklahoma Territory, was also lost due to bad weather. *Billboard* reported an increase in the show's stock and equipment in Portland when twelve white parade horses, three cages with animals, and one stock car were added.

The 1903 season had probably been successful for the Norris & Rowe operation, and plans were made to cover about the same route the next season. A slight move further east into Iowa was included and Colorado was omitted. The season was to open early in March and end in late November. Plans also called for a further enlargement of the equipment and personnel. The total number of cars used in 1904 was either fifteen or eighteen; references differ. *Billboard* (26 March 1904, p. 9) states fifteen cars, sixty-five baggage wagons, sixteen ring horses, seventy-six ponies, and 225 people. It is estimated that about eighteen cages were in use. The performance itself was certainly enlarged with the addition of some prominent, well-known, and, it is assumed, high-priced acts. Featured were the Six Marvelous Belfords (acrobats); Melnotte, La Nole and Melnotte (high wire act); the Grohs (five contortionists); The Flying La Vans (an aerial troupe of five members); the Gardner Family (six people who worked on horizontal bars); McDonald Brothers (three trick riders); and the Royal Oka Japanese Troupe (eight members). Performance was given in two rings and one stage under a top composed of 130 x 50 - 30-50. The menagerie was a 70 ft. with four 30s.

An indication of the affect of the financial stress of the year upon the circus is that the price of admission was cut in half. In November, 1903, in San Luis Obispo, Calif., the Norris & Rowe Show was charging fifty cents for adults and twenty-five cents for children. At the beginning of the 1904 tour in Pasadena (March 7) the show stated "One 25¢ Ticket Admits to Everything." This in spite of the fact that the amount of equipment had been increased and that additional personnel had been added. Another complicating factor for the season - and a permanent threat for as long as the Norris & Rowe Show was in existence - was the arrival on the Pacific Coast of the Great Floto Circus. This show had opened its season in Texas, played dates in the Southwest,



Rider Austin King is shown with a tandem team, with a cross cage in the background. This photo was taken in 1904. Woodcock Collection.

and arrived at Redlands, California, on April 9. The Norris & Rowe stand in that city was March 18. The Tammen directed outfit moved approximately one month behind Norris & Rowe's New Big Shows on its California tour and played Carson City, Nevada, on May 30, which the California show had played on April 30. The Norris & Rowe organization had returned to California after that date while the Great Floto Show continued east into Utah and Colorado. During July, Norris & Rowe were occupied with Washington, Montana, and Dakota dates and by the end of the month were making Minnesota stands. This show did not play Canadian dates in 1904 except for the usual British Columbia dates.

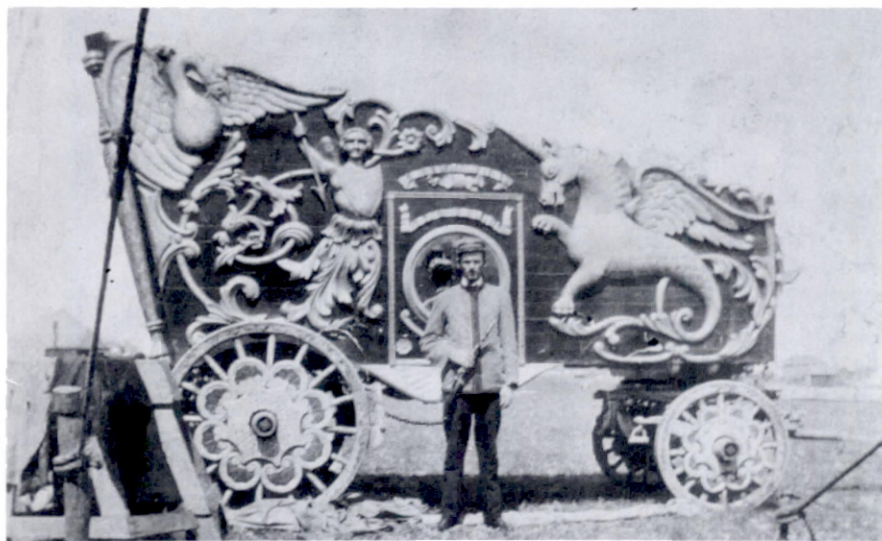
The Great Floto Show, on the other hand, moved from Colorado through Idaho into Oregon and Washington.

The highly decorated cage was paraded closed, seats on top were later occupied by performers or clowns. J. W. Beggs Collection.

From the latter state it made a route across Canada and reached Minnesota by early September. Both shows were in Minnesota during the second week of September but did not play the same towns. The Tammen show certainly had indicated its intentions to Norris & Rowe this season and its route, so similar to the one usually played by the "Pride of the West," plus the financial problems of the nation, must be considered a definite set-back for the California outfit. However, the usual return tour through the Southwest was made by Norris & Rowe with a few dates added in Old Mexico.

"Hannibal," the side-show lion, got loose in a car and killed a horse while the show was enroute from San Francisco to San Jose. In late April, while making the run over the Sierra Nevadas to Reno, the show suffered a wreck which damaged some cages. These were repaired at Portland and two new ones were added. During the performance to a straw house in Seattle on Memorial Day a horse broke loose and knocked several people down. Aside from these incidents, the 1904 tour went off smoothly and the show was back in its San Jose quarters by the end of November.





While some writers have stated that the circus organization of the Norris brothers and Hutton S. Rowe had been so successful for the first ten years that it was possible for them to launch two outfits in 1905, this writer has a different opinion. It can be argued that the 1904 expansion and tour was a financial disaster and that the second show was launched to try to stabilize the larger outfit. In other words, they formed a dog and pony show of the type familiar to them which could play the "friendly" Pacific Coast region and could make money which, in turn, would pay off debts of the larger show. Reasons for these conclusions are as follows: the Cozad Dog & Pony Show was of a type which the owners knew from past experience could be operated successfully in a depressed state of the nation. They had succeeded very well in the mid-1890s under the same conditions with a two-car show. They sent it on a route that had been played for many years with financial reward. An interview with Mrs. Clarence Norris (*Show World*, March 20, 1909) indicates that the Cozad Show was a money maker and that the finances were used for the bigger show.

The Cozad Dog & Pony Show was a two-car organization under the direction of Clarence Norris and carried fifty dogs, fifty ponies, twenty monkeys, four goats, and a band of twelve pieces. It used a canvas of eighty by thirty feet with one forty foot middle piece. Its route lay in the northwest - Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and Alberta. One of its longest stands was a Seattle, always a financial success for Norris & Rowe, where at the end of June it played for eight days. The bigger outfit had played that city for three days (May 30, 31-June 1). At the end of the season the Cozad equipment was sold to Burch and Reiss of Sacramento who put out a dog and pony show that toured California in 1906. While the profit from the season no doubt helped defray some of the costs of operating the larger circus, it still did not assist enough to bring it home a winner and at

This highly carved bandwagon was used by the Norris & Rowe show but the exact years had not been established. McClintock Collection.

the end of the 1905 season the Norris & Rowe Show was still in trouble.

In 1906, the big show opened with a nine-day stand at Mechanics Pavilion, San Francisco, and went under canvas at San Jose on March 13. This was the last season that it would use the quarters in that city. During the following summer a "home-town booster movement" raised \$1,700 by subscription to buy land in Santa Cruz which was given to the Norris & Rowe Circus for permanent quarters.

After the San Jose date the show moved down the coast route to Southern California and returned by way of the San Joaquin Valley. It had completed its mid-California dates and had reached Carson City, Nevada, by April 22. The Great Floto Show, again about a month behind

Two closed cross cages are shown lined up for parade on the show in the period around 1904. J. W. Beggs Collection.



Norris & Rowe, reached Carson City on May 20. By the first of June the Floto Show had run north to Walla Walla while Norris & Rowe came into that eastern Washington town on the sixth. The Tammen organization was first into several Montana towns and then moved south to Wyoming and Colorado while the California outfit ran east into North Dakota and Minnesota. Opposition between the two shows lasted about a week. A carnival, E. J. Arnold's Big Show, provided some contention when Norris & Rowe played Salem, on May 8. The carnival was in town for the entire week, May 1-6.

At Saulte Ste. Marie, Michigan, (July 19) the Norris & Rowe Circus crossed into Ontario, Canada for thirty-seven dates. It returned to Michigan at Ypsilanti on September 1. The route then included a tour of Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, New Mexico, Old Mexico (four weeks which began on October 10 at Chihuahua and included nine days in Mexico City), and a return to its new quarters at Santa Cruz, California.

The new winter quarters were located at "Vue De La Eau" in Santa Cruz. This nickname was applied to an area of bluffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Nearby was a small round building which was a waiting room at the end of the street car line. The thoroughfare on which the street car traveled was originally named Garfield Avenue. Because there was another street in town named Garfield Street, the city fathers changed the former name to Woodrow Avenue. The circus quarters and zoo were located at the southeast corner of Cliff Drive and Woodrow Avenue. Across the street was a Museum operated by a Mr. Moore which had opened in 1902. (The writer, at this point, wishes to thank Mr. Francis J. Carney of Felton, Calif. not only for this information, but other research on Norris & Rowe history in Santa Cruz, and a delightful tour of the area which included a visit to the site of these quarters and the various circus lots used by this show, Sells-Floto, Al G. Barnes, and other circuses

that have visited the town over the years.)

The Norris & Rowe Circus traveled on twenty cars in 1905 - an increase of five from the year before. There were nine flats, four stock cars, two box cars, three coaches, and two in advance. The big top was 140 ft. round with four forty-foot middle pieces. The menagerie was housed in an 80 ft. round top with five thirty-foot middle pieces. This new menagerie tent was received at Fergus Falls, Minnesota, on July 4 from Thompson and Vandiver. Earlier a new big top, a 150 ft. with three fifty-foot middle pieces had been delivered. Leonhardt had delivered a new bandwagon before the season started. For the first time news articles mentioned a steam calliope in the parade. Although *Clipper*, May 10, 1902, mentions that Sullivan & Eagle Company was building a calliope for Norris & Rowe, no description or mention of this vehicle has been located in any newspaper account of the parade. Not until 1905 is a calliope listed by the press, and then the instrument is mentioned in many articles.

On May 31st the Norris & Rowe show was scheduled to play Sedro-Woolley, Washington, but the date was lost because of high tides that delayed the departure from Vancouver, British Columbia. The show had moved from Nanaimo, B.C., back to Vancouver and lost time transferring the train. It arrived at Sedro Woolley too late to give a performance and went on to Everett. At Walla Walla, where it was contesting with the Floto Show, it arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon due to a late departure from Pendleton, Oregon. The afternoon performance began at five o'clock.

There was rain in Tacoma and again on the opening day in Seattle. The parade, in the latter town in the rain, used three bands, a long line of riders, twenty-five cages, Roman chariots, camels, elephants, and the steam calliope. Rin had also caught the show in San Luis Obispo, Calif. on March 15. As it arrived in a downpour from Salinas at nine o'clock in the morning; paraded in the rain; and it



This is the well known Norris & Rowe steam calliope in a parade in Mexico City in 1906. Original print from Woodcock Collection.

gave performances to one-half houses in both afternoon and evening. The night show was cut short owing to the heavy downpour. The show loaded and headed south for Santa Barbara despite a washout on the railroad near Ventura. The San Luis Obispo *Morning Tribune* commented, "Once they were here before and it rained so hard that no performance was given, but they paid their bills cheerfully." Wadens, Minnesota, was also lost in 1905 because of rain. In that town the constable wanted to collect the license but the mayor said the circus didn't have to pay because it did not give a performance. It ran to Fergus Falls and did not arrive there until very late in the day. It was three o'clock before the doors opened.

The Greater Norris & Rowe Circus

Another closed cage is pictured with clowns riding on top, during a parade. J. vv. Beggs Collection.



opened the 1906 season at Santa Cruz on March 10. The staff included H. S. Rowe, General Manager; C. I. Norris, Secretary and Treasurer; E. C. Warner, General Agent; E. M. Burke, Traffic Manager; J. C. Stuart, Contracting Agent; H. O. Smith, Special Agent; Tom Myers, Press Agent; Tom Moore, 24-Hour Man; Alton Osborn, Manager of Advance Car No. 1; Tony Caudell, Manager of Advance Car No. 2; C. G. Henry, Manager of Brigade No. 3; Joseph F. Geisler, Equestrian Director; George Dyman, Lot Superintendent; Herbert Rumley, Menagerie Supt.; George Wormald, Boss Canvasman; John Foley, Boss Hostler; Joseph Madigan, Supt. of Wardrobe; and Jack Alvord, Bandmaster. Walter Shannon continued in charge of the side-show.

Performers were Edna Maretta, Frank and Dollie Miller, Grace Morton, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Hocum, Austin King, Herbert Rumley, and George White, all riders; the Stirk Family, the Four Picard Brothers, the Sugimoto Troupe, Rose and Irene Maretta, Martin and Crouch, Lucier, the Malcolms, Deming and Onslow, George Settler, William Scott, "Tote" Ducrow, the Le Fleur Troupe, Flying Sterlings, and many other capable artists.

The show played the first week along the California coast and opened the second week in Los Angeles with a four-day run. Then several days were lost while the show remained at Redlands due to washouts on the railroad line. The week of April 2-7 was spent in the San Joaquin Valley and the following six days in the bay area. The next week, a very eventful one in California, was occupied with dates at Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Vallejo, Vacaville, Woodland, and Sacramento. On Wednesday, April 18, the day of the great San Francisco earthquake and fire, the show was in Vallejo about twenty-five miles from the big city. Needless to say no dates were played in that unfortunate town in 1906. Whether the show played the rest of the dates scheduled that week is unknown, but, in any event, all acti-

vities in that area, indeed in all of California, were pointed toward sending assistance to the beleaguered city on the bay. According to one report the Norris & Rowe train of twenty cars (four coaches, six stocks, ten flats) moved at a slow rate of speed into Oakland after the earthquake. This would indicate that the dates at Vacaville, and Woodland may not have been filled.

Carson City and Reno were played on the 23rd and 24th and the Norris & Rowe Circus returned to California to make its usual stands through the northern valley on its way to Oregon. This year, after a two-day stand at Portland, the show moved east to the The Dallas and Pendleton. The latter town was lost because of high winds. The tents blew down during the afternoon performance; were erected again; and blew down a second time. The night show was cancelled. The outfit went on to Walla Walla and Dayton, Washington; picked up three Idaho dates at the end of this, the tenth week, and rolled into Spokane on a Sunday. The tents were erected at once and promptly blew down. Rain, failure of the light plant, injuries to performers, and the collision of the pole wagon with a street car marked the two-day stand in Spokane.

This circus played Couer D'Alene, Idaho, the following Wednesday and then returned to Washington for thirteen additional dates which included three days at Seattle. It was late leaving Aberdeen due to wagons breaking through planked

streets and got out of town at four o'clock on Friday morning. This unfortunate event delayed the arrival in Tacoma (Friday's date) until eleven o'clock. The afternoon show did not start until four o'clock with a loss of patronage.

From Sedro Woolley, the last date in Washington, the circus moved into British Columbia. This presaged a run of eight weeks in Canada. All went well for the first three weeks and then, while running from Prince Albert to Saskatoon on July 3, five flat cars left the rails and crashed into the prairie. With the exception of six sea lions, no animals or people were killed. However, eight cages, four tableau wagons, a harness wagon, and three small baggage wagons were completely demolished. Thus, in the first sixteen weeks of 1906, the show had lost dates because of floods, suffered a severe earthquake, encountered at least two blowdowns, made late arrivals because of street accidents, and was engaged in a crippling railroad crash.

The tour across Canada continued with three weeks and five days in Manitoba and six days in Ontario filling the schedule from July 2-August 3. It entered the United States again at Red Lake Falls, Minnesota, after playing Emerson, Manitoba. The route then included Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois stands. Vandalia, Missouri was reached on September 4 and the show made one date in northwestern Arkansas as it crossed into Oklahoma. It



A group of mounted riders await the start of a Norris & Rowe parade. J. W. Beggs Collection.

moved back to Fort Smith, then returned to Oklahoma, and, after leaving Texarkana, made six stands in Louisiana. Texas came next and the Norris & Rowe Show made fourteen stands in the Lone Star State including Laredo on October 10. From this point it moved into Old Mexico for forty-four dates. October 20 through 28 was spent in the capital city of that nation and several other towns were played for two or three days. It returned to Texas at El Paso on November 29 and from that point it returned to California through southern Arizona.

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THE BRIDGEPORT WINTER QUARTERS PAINT SHOP

By John M. Staley

The following article is from a book, as yet unpublished, by John M. Staley. Mr. Staley is well known as a steward and cook house manager on many circuses over the last fifty years. Additional chapters from Mr. Staley's book are planned for future issues of the *BANDWAGON*.

INTRODUCTION-P.T. Barnum's book *The Life of Barnum* gives some insight into the building of the original winter quarters in Barnum's hometown of Bridgeport Conn. In Chapter L, titled *The Great Alliance*, the author wrote, "In 1880 I went into partnership with James A. Bailey and James L. Hutchison." "This partnership entered into, we conceived the idea of building a monster emporium

of winter quarters to accommodate all of our wild animals, horses, chariots, railroad cars and the immense paraphernalia of the united shows, instead of distributing the same in different localities. We enclosed a ten acre lot in Bridgeport, adjacent to the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. In this inclosure we erected an elephant house, one hundred feet square, kept heated to the temperature naturally required by these animals. Here thirty to forty elephants are luxuriously housed and trained to perform in a circus ring, located in the center of the building. In another large building the lions, tigers and leopards, which require a different temperature, are lodged and trained. Still another building accom-

modates the camels and other caged animals. The amphibious animals, hippopotami, sea lions have in their inclosure a huge pond heated by steam pipes.

A building three hundred feet long covers eight lines of railroad tracks where the cars are stored." Later Barnum wrote, "the harness, paint and blacksmith shops are all immense and distinct."

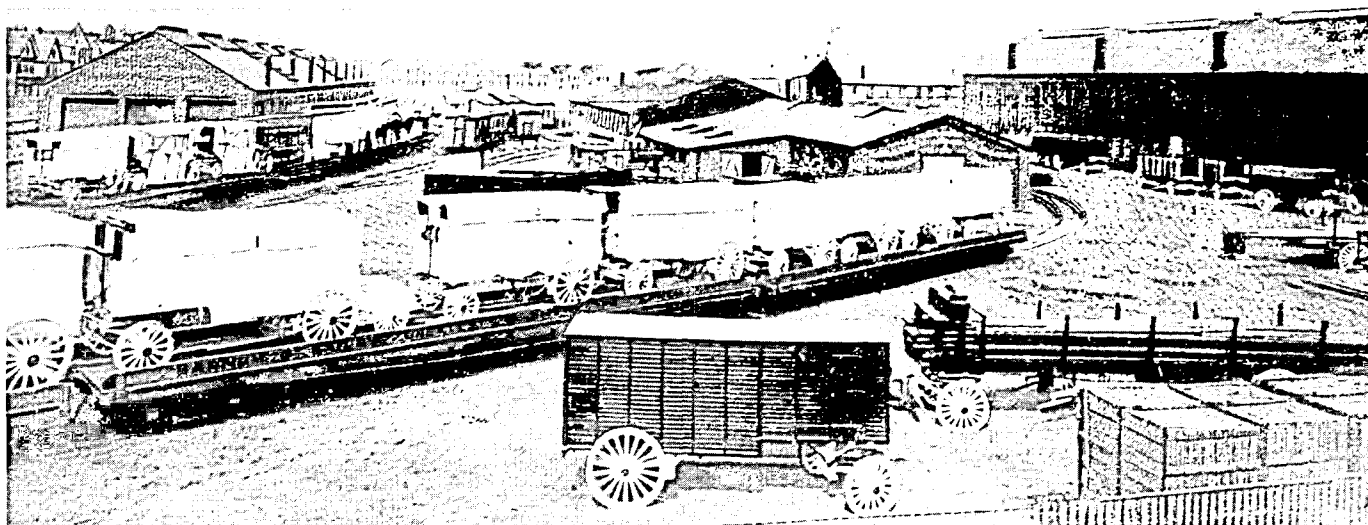
From this record we are assuming the paint and blacksmith shop was built as early as 1880.

All of the buildings at the old Barnum & Bailey winterquarters in Bridgeport, Connecticut were extremely well constructed of heavy timber and extra thick brick walls. When I arrived there in 1918,

This fine photo was taken of the inside of the paint shop during the winter of 1908-09. The photo appeared in the March 20, 1909 issue of the *Billboard*. Wagons shown from left to right are: Asia, Europe, America, Africa, Queen's Float (Siam), Horn & Clown calliope,

Golden Age of Chivalry, Egypt, Spain, Tableau 100 from Buffalo Bill, a small cage and baggage wagon 35. In the left foreground four men are shown painting grandstand folding chairs. The building contained a number of skylights in the ceiling, Pfening Collection.





as a sixteen year old youngster I inquired as to when the buildings were erected, but no one that I came in contact with knew for sure. But I felt sure they had all been built before the turn of the century.

The paint shop was one of the larger of the group of buildings. It was a huge two story structure. The first or ground floor was partly used as storage for wagons that were too valuable to leave out during the rough New England winters. Wagons of all descriptions were also lined up on the ground floor for the blacksmith shop, which was located at one end of the building. The second floor was used completely as the paint shop, except for a small section at one end used by the electrical department.

Cages, tableau wagons, chariots, buggies and baggage wagons were all painted on the second floor. All wagons, that is, except for the giant Two-Hemisphere bandwagon, two long pole wagons, cook house range wagon #2, the large very heavy light plant wagons and a few others that were too long to fit on the elevator. These were all cleaned and painted in the car barns, after being jacked and set on heavy blocks of timber. The wheels and lead bars were taken to the paint shop to be cleaned, painted and striped.

The elevator was an old hand operated piece of machinery that was put in at the time of original construction of the building. It must have been one of the first heavy duty elevators ever installed. The rope used to raise and lower the platform of the elevator was at least two inches thick or better. The large wheels were made of wood and there were numerous iron gears that controlled the raising and lowering.

To raise or lower the lift was a time consuming chore. Either empty or loaded, it had one gait, and that was slow. It would require about around twenty to thirty minutes to put a wagon on and take it off on the second level.

Even as a youngster I could not understand the Ringlings having a paint shop on the second floor, let alone that fire trap

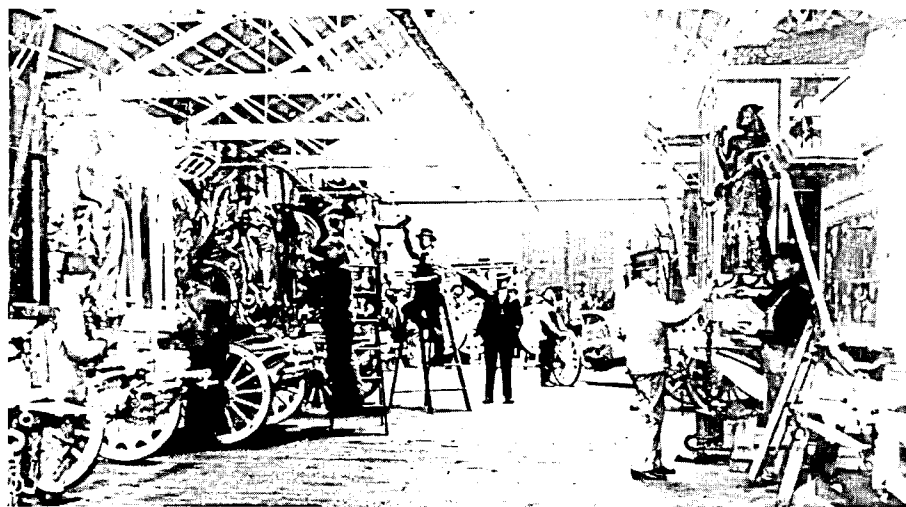
The two story paintshop building is shown on the right of this photo taken of the quarters around 1903. This view was probably from a postcard. Pfening Collection.

in Bridgeport, as it would have been impossible to get any wagons out of the second floor quickly in case of fire. The only exit was the old hand elevator. There were, however, many signs posted stating "positively NO SMOKING".

One day while talking to the boss painter, Joe Hitchinson, I asked him what would happen if ever they had a fire, he replied that it would be impossible to save many of the wagons, perhaps none.

The beams and flooring were of heavy oak. At times there would be ten or more wagons on the floor in different stages of being cleaned and painted. After the wagons had been spotted on the floor they would be jacked, the wheels would be marked as to number and side of wa-

This view of the inside of the paint shop was taken in the period around 1915. A number of cages are shown as well as a baggage wagon on jacks on the right. Pfening Collection.



gon and then removed and taken to the lye vat. This was a large concrete receptacle equipped with a ratchet wheel that was used to raise and lower the wheels in and out of the vat. As the wheel was being lowered the operator would insert an iron pipe through the hub. At a certain depth the pipe would fit in a slot on the inside of the vat, allowing the wheel to turn freely. The wheel was then scraped with a steel brush to remove all the dried dirt, scaling paint and grease. It was then raised, rinsed and placed on a steel tripod to dry, later to be painted and striped.

At that time there were two gold leafers in the paint shop. If I am not mistaken that was all they did in the shop. They were considered artists and had their own brushes to apply the thin sheets of gold leaf that came in books. As they worked I noticed that they would run their brushes through their hair ever so often. I was told that this created static electricity which acted as a magnet drawing the thin sheets of gold leaf to the brush.

The paint storage room was located in about the center of the shop, it was enclosed with siding on two sides and had a

wire netting on the front side. The paint storage room was locked at night. Next to the door of the paint room there was a fire alarm box that the night watchman had to punch at each hour during the night. The room held drums of linseed oil, turpentine, varnish, shellac and paint. In the fall the room would be stacked to the ceiling with cases of paint. In the center of the storage room there was a large round vat that all of the old paint from opened cans was dumped into. The attendant would give the vat a few licks ever so often with a wooden paddle. This "duke's mixture" was used for the tops of all the wagons, stock cars and coaches. The color varied from light to dark brown. The men in the paint shop had a name for this mixture, but it has been so long ago I have forgotten the name.

After the animal cages, other wagons, and for that matter anything else needed for Madison Square Garden was out of the paint shop they would start on the outdoor equipment. At times they would have to finish some of the painting in New York City.

I believe the pay at winterquarters for the regular workers was three dollars a week, nine hours a day, six days a week. Some departments had a seven day week. In the paint shop the wages quoted did not include the gold leafers or artists that were used at times to paint pictures on the side of some of the parade tableau wagons.

One of the last big jobs that entered the paint shop was the wooden grandstand folding chairs. The chairs had to be cleaned and painted by hand, at that time they were painted a light yellow. Two men would hang the chairs on the beams to dry. Spikes extended from the beams and one man handled a wooden pole twelve to fifteen feet in length with a "V" on the end to hold the top frame of the chair for lifting to the drying spikes. The same process was used to remove the chairs after the paint had dried. The second operation was to shellac the chairs,



The vastness of the paintshop building is shown in this Heck Photo taken in 1915. Following the fire in the winter of 1924 building was rebuilt as a one story structure using the existing walls. Circus World Museum photo from the author's collection.

again hanging them on the beams to dry.

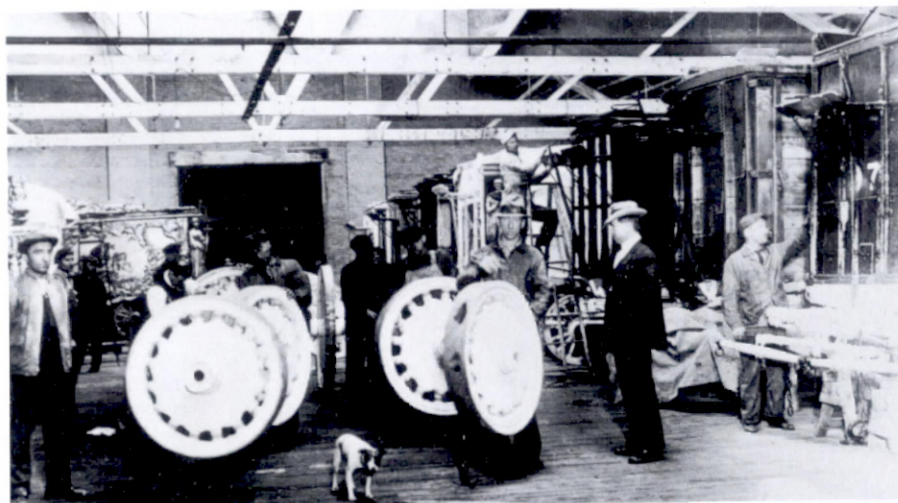
Any of the paint shop crew could work overtime on the chairs, after the supper meal or on Sunday. The pay was five cents an hour, surprisingly they never wanted for men.

Contrary to what some writers have recorded about Charles Ringling having a "hot line" to the winterquarters in Bridgeport, I have my doubts. In the years that I was steward for Charles Ringling on his palatial yacht "Symphonis" he never had one worry about winterquarters. He had a hand picked staff that knew the circus inside and out.

To give one instance, we had a group of Mr. Ringling's onboard the yacht for a three week trip of fishing up the Shark River that empties into the Ten Thousand Islands, then into the Gulf of Mexico.

The Ringlings would not have a ship to shore radio telephone installed, they

The wheels were placed on stands where they could be turned for painting following cleaning. Seven wagons are lined up on the right. This was also taken around 1915. Pfening Collection.



wanted to be alone with nature, and let the world go by. They did not know about the big plant shop fire at winterquarters that destroyed the two story paint shop, blacksmith and wagon shop and the numerous wagons stored on the first floor until the yacht was on its way back to Sarasota from the fishing cruise. We had stopped on the way to call the house and tell the chauffeur where the yacht would dock so he could pick up some of the group and drive them back to Sarasota. That was when Mr. Charles heard about the fire. Outwardly it did not bother him one bit, he remarked that the men in Bridgeport would take care of everything.

Mr. Charles always dreaded the trip to New York each spring, and would stall off until the last minute and then wasted no time in coming back to Sarasota.

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The Egyptian Influence on the American Circus

By Stuart Thayer

In 1798 Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt. His campaign was militarily successful, but politically a failure. A lasting effect of it, however, was to open Egypt to western eyes, which anti-heathen governments had previously prevented. The future emperor had the foresight to take with him 150 French scientists and specialists with their libraries and instruments and as the troops advanced these experts began the unfolding of the archeological secrets. Their discoveries were the first great cultural event of the nineteenth century.

The scientific papers that were published gradually over the ensuing thirty years fascinated the western world. History, archeology, customs, the entire range of ancient Egyptian life was revived through this effort. Of the artifacts, the Rosetta Stone, finally deciphered in 1822, is perhaps best remembered.

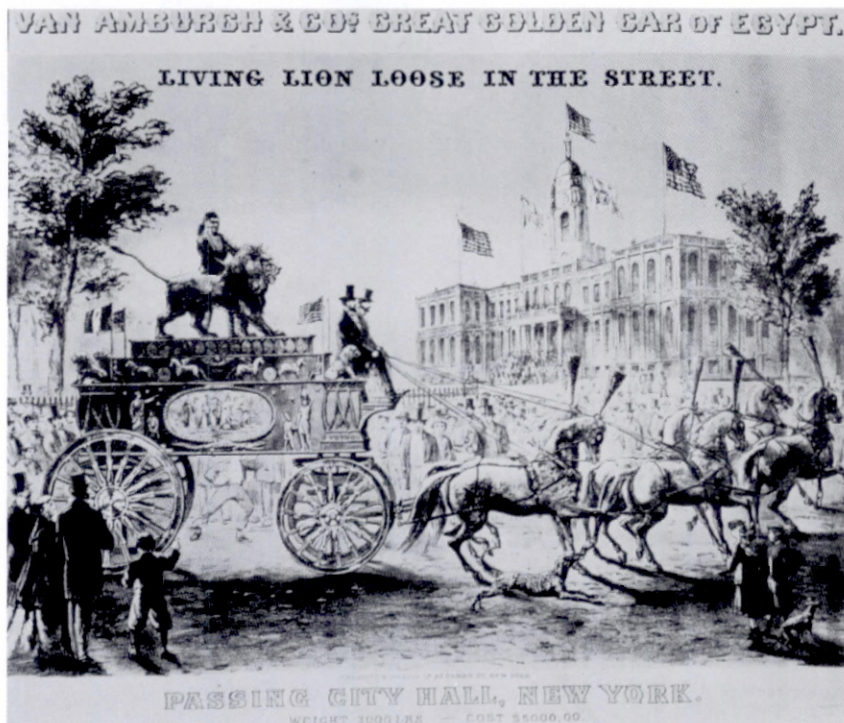


Photo No. 1. New York Hall of Justice, "The Tombs". Photo courtesy University of Michigan.

In America a period of neo-classicism was just ending. The Greek Revival, as it's called, had come to be impractical and the *avant-garde* seized upon the Egyptian discoveries as a source of design and decoration. Queen Victoria came to the throne of Great Britain in 1836, co-incidental with this cultural change, and the Egyptian period is therefore the initial phase of what we call the Victorian era. The woman herself had nothing to do with the later events, of course, except provide a very convenient name.

Cities settled during this period took Egyptian names. Memphis, Tennessee, Cairo and Thebes, Illinois and Alexandria, Missouri are examples. Architecture was influenced. Probably the best known structure with Egyptian lines being New York City's Hall of Justice, the "Tombs",

Photo No. 3. The Cleopatra Tableau on the Barnum and Bailey Circus. This was one of the thirteen wagons built for the Greatest Show on Earth's home coming in 1903. Bob Good Collection.

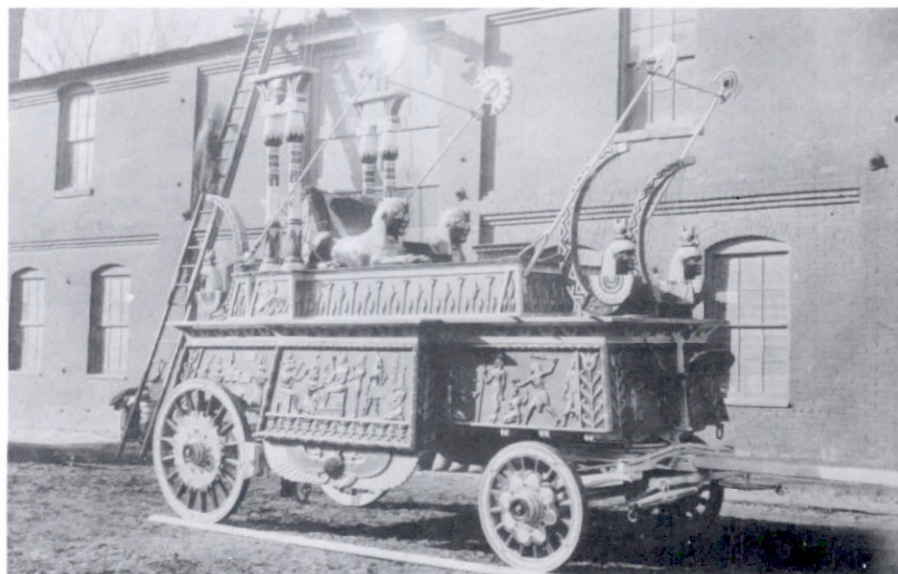


built in 1838. Another was the reservoir at 5th Avenue and 42d Street present site of the New York Public Library. Less known, but surviving examples are the Whaler's Presbyterian Church in Sag Harbor, New York and the entrance to Mount Auburn Cemetery in Boston.

Pervasive as things Egyptian were in the culture they did not affect the circus for some time. Showmen were followers, not leaders in taste and until the late 1860's they were still in what might be called the

Photo No. 2. One of the first tableau wagons with an Egyptian theme was on the Van Amburgh show in 1868. The wagon also represents another popular theme of wagons of this period: the idea of placing a living lion on top of the wagon. Richard E. Conover Collection.

classical phase of the art. European performers and American performers with European - mainly latinate - names were the style until the 1870's. Oddly enough, it



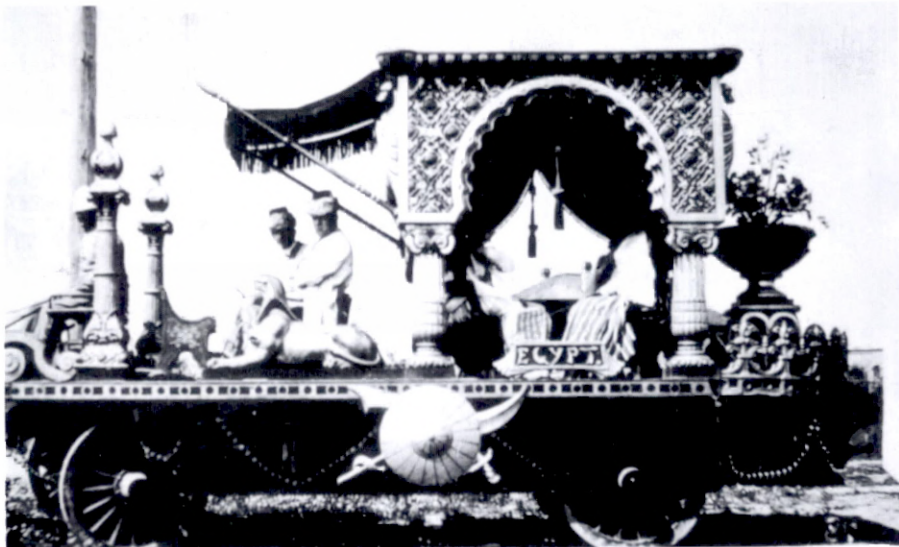


Photo No. 4. Original configuration of the Ringling Egypt Float. This float was one of a large group of nation floats on the Ringling show in the early 1900's. Trimpy Photo.

was camels that brought the circus to its Egyptian interest.

Camels had been shown in America for years. A male and female dromedary were exhibited in Salem, Massachusetts as early as 1789. Van Amburgh & Company had imported two in 1836. In 1849 Crane & Company had a ten camel hitch on their bandwagon. Barnum's Caravan, the Howes & Lent show, featured camels in the 1850's. But they were expensive, as costly as polar bears, and it was not until the United States Government put a herd on the block that the beasts were readily available to all sizes of shows.

Jefferson Davis, when Secretary of War in 1855, concurred in a plan to import camels for the use of troops in the arid southwest deserts. The expense of hauling water and the excessive heat of the area made the use of horses and mules un-

attractive by comparison with camels that could go long distances without water and would drink brackish water with as much gusto as they would fresh. Fodder was no problem, either, for camels eat anything that grows.

Congress appropriated \$30,000 for the experiment and in May, 1855 Major Henry C. Wayne boarded ship for the Levant. In Smyrna he purchased 13 Bactrian camels and in Alexandria 20 riding dromedaries and hired seven drovers to care for them in America. On May 14, 1856 the ship *Supply* landed in Indianola, Texas. One animal had died and two had been born en route so the total disembarked was 34. All but two of the drovers deserted as soon as they got ashore. The camels were marched inland by way of Victoria and San Antonio to Camp Verde near Bandera Pass. They were joined after February, 1857 by another shipment of 44 camels.

The animals were employed in hauling supplies between San Antonio and the



Photo No. 5. Good side view of the enlarged Egypt wagon. This wagon was usually paraded with a sixteen camel hitch. P. M. McClintock Collection.



Gulf ports. They became a common sight on the route. As with elephants, the size and smell of camels has a tendency to panic horses and the town of Brownsville, Texas passed an ordinance forbidding the beasts on its streets in order to protect its equine inhabitants.

In 1858 the Watson Ranch near Houston imported two shiploads of camels, presumably less than 100, and a San Francisco concern brought in 20 Bactrians to haul salt from Esmerelda County to the Washoe Silver Mine in Nevada, a distance of 200 miles. The state of Nevada also

Photo No. 6. The Ringling hippo den had an Egyptian flavor. Photo taken in Memphis, on 5 November 1917. Woodcock Collection.

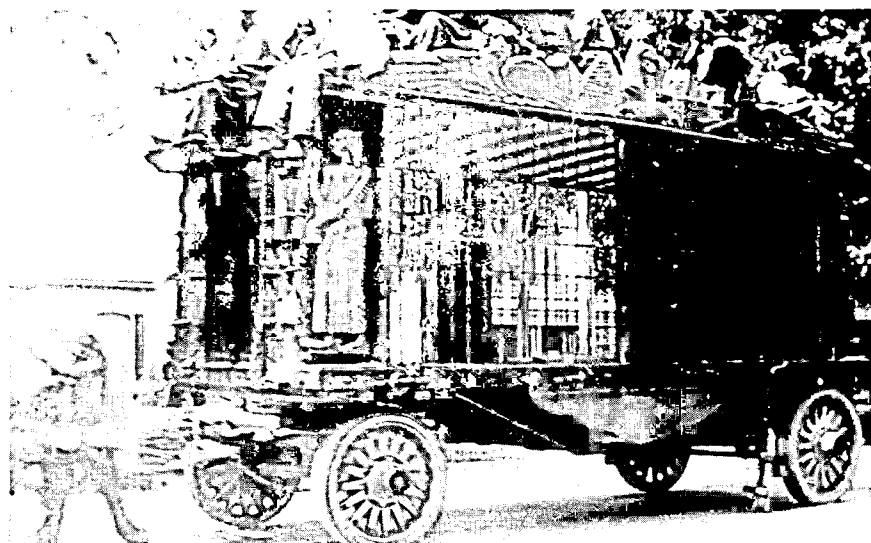


Photo No. 7. Forepaugh-Sells Egyptian hippo den. This picture was taken while the cage was on the John Robinson Circus in the early 1920's. The corner statues from this wagon are now located in the Miami County Court House in Peru, Indiana. Woodcock Collection.

passed a law forbidding camels on public roads adding to the length of the journey for the Washoe herd.

The army broke its herd into two parts, the Texas herd mentioned and a herd in California hauling supplies from Fort Tejon to Fort Defiance in New Mexico. A corral was built in Los Angeles at what is now First and Broadway, where the Los Angeles Times building stands. Begun with 43 beasts the California herd soon swelled to 100. The whole experiment ended with the advent of the Civil War. Davis, of course, left the War Department, and the responsibility passed to men less interested than he.

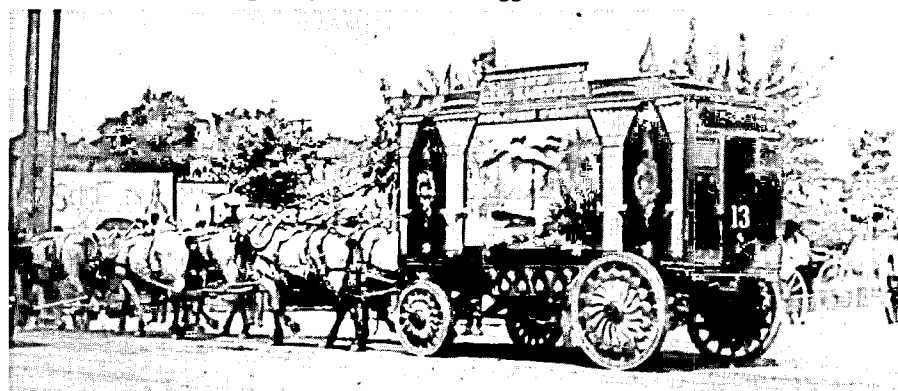
The California herd came under the care of one Hadji Ali, a drover who had come to the United States with the second shipload of camels. He could not keep them fed, however, and in the late sixties turned them loose to forage for themselves. Feral camels then became somewhat common in southern California. Most of them were shot by ranchers into whose wheat fields they wandered. The last one was supposedly shot in 1900, though some Paiute Indians claim that three were seen near Victorville in 1928.

It was the Texas herd that fell into the hands of showmen. Unlike California, Texas was show country immediately after the war and circuses regularly visited the

state. The government sold the animals for \$80 each, a bargain when one considers that animal dealers were asking \$400 to \$800 for a dromedary and \$1000 for a Bactrian in 1874. Not all the Texas herd went to circuses as teamsters along the Gila River in Arizona were complaining about feral camels frightening their teams as late as 1879.

A circus proprietor with a string of eight or ten camels could add "Egyptian Caravan" to his title and many of them did. Van Amburgh & Company used the phrase in 1866, Dan Castello in 1870, the Great European in 1873 and 1874, Warner & Henderson in 1874 and Burr Robbins in 1874 and 1875. Miles Orton carried eight camels in 1868, J.M. French fourteen in 1869, Castello eight in 1870. Andrew Haight and W.W. Cole had them as well.

Photo No. 8. The Egyptian influence is evidenced on this Carl Hagenbeck cage by the lotus blossoms, and Nile painting. Beggs Collection.



Seeking to bring an aura of mystery and romance to the hinterlands the showmen capitalized on eastern and oriental themes as often as possible. The phrase "Egyptian darkness" was common in show advertising and popular writing, many African animals were advertised as coming from the River Nile whether they did or not because the phrase was exotic. Super-numeraries in parade and spec were dressed as arabs or egyptian *fellahin*.

It became the fashion to decorate tableau wagons in a manner representing various parts of the world and Egypt was a popular theme, being both exotic and recognizable. Its stylized art and hieroglyphics were very adaptable to the wood carver's art.

One of the very first tableau wagons built had an Egyptian theme and was called the Great Golden Car of Egypt by Van Amburgh & Company in 1868. It was the first of many that paraded with a living lion loose atop it. (photo 2)

The famous series of tableaux built by the Sebastian Wagon Company in 1903 for the Barnum and Bailey homecoming included the Cleopatra tableau (photo 3). This one was probably the most lavishly decorated of any we are discussing here.

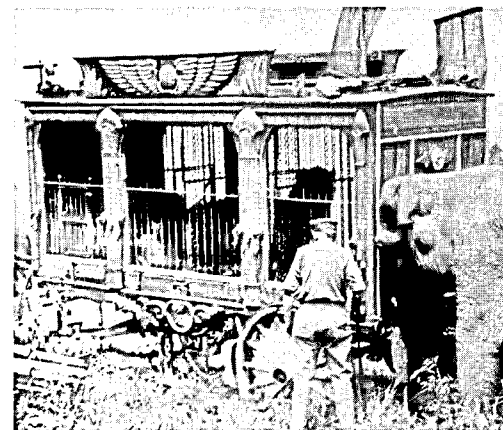


Photo No. 9. Another variation of the lotus blossom theme is shown in this picture of a 1924 Sells Floto Cage. Burt Wilson Collection.

Ringling Brothers had several eastern floats built in 1902 or 1903 and one of them was the Egypt (photo 4). Some time near to 1910 these floats were dismantled and some parts of them applied to tableau wagons that could carry a load. Ringling's well known Egypt tableau (photo 5) was the result of this construction. Both forms of this wagon were often pulled by a camel team.

Between 1903 and 1905 Ringling Brothers added a new hippopotamus den that had a distinct Egyptian flavor, as be-hooved a den for an ex-resident of the Nile. This den (photo 6) had some of the most esthetically satisfying carvings of any ever made. It was lost in the 1924 winter quarters fire in Bridgeport.

Barnum & Bailey added a hippopotamus

Photo No. 10. When the Ringling Bros. put the Forepaugh Sells show back on the road in 1910 they had their cousins, the Moellers, build this fancy Egypt wagon. This tableau disappears after the 1911 season on Forepaugh Sells. Maurice Allaire Collection.

den to the Forepaugh-Sells show at the same time. Among its decorations were flat, corner carvings representing Egyptian renderings of women (photo 7). This den later served on Barnum & Bailey and John Robinson.

Cages with lotus blossoms carved from wood were built in 1904 by the Bode Wagon Company for the Carl Hagenbeck show (photo 8) and in 1905 or 1906 by an unknown builder for Sells-Floto (photo 9). The lotus represented the life-giving Nile in Egyptian mythology.

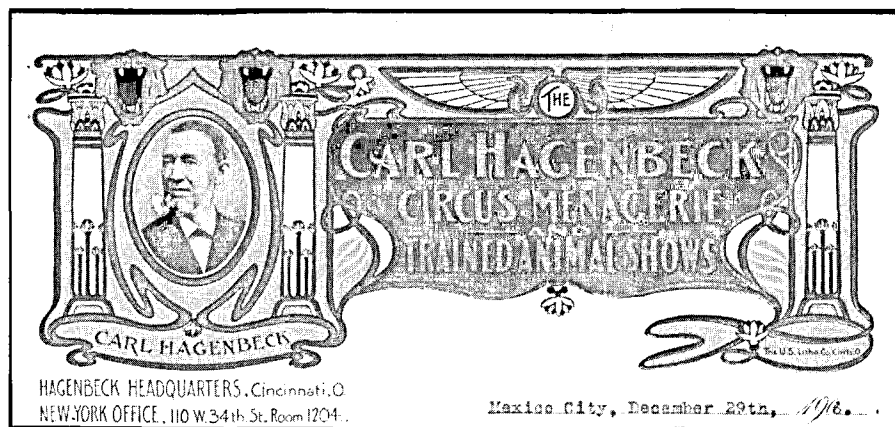
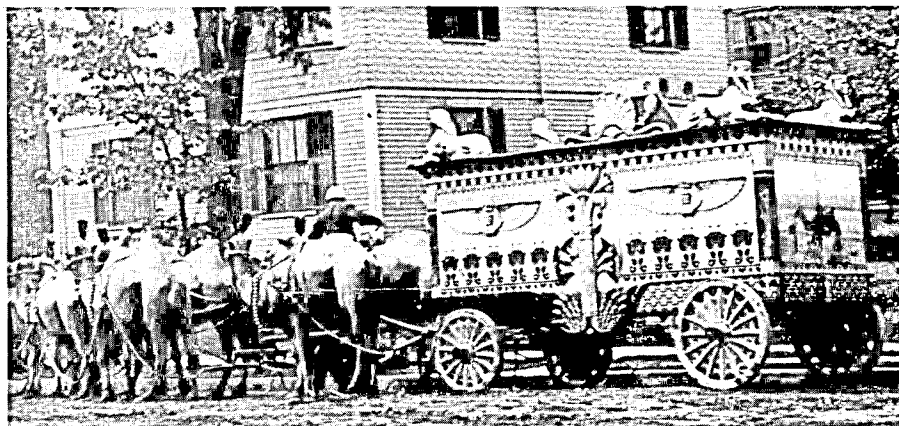
With the return of the Forepaugh-Sells title to the road in 1910 several new tableaux were built by Moeller Brothers. One of them was an Egypt car (photo 10). It was paraded in 1910 and 1911 and then disappeared.

An example of a smaller show trying to keep up with the fad, but lacking the means to do it ornately is the circa 1921 Gentry Brothers Cleopatra tableau (photo 11) on which a painting of the queen depicts her looking out at what appears to be an Indiana landscape.

As a final touch of Egyptian construction Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey used a spec float (photo 12) in the 1920's to add North African splendor to the opening of the program.

There were other uses of the theme in lithographs and costuming. Carl Hagenbeck's letterhead of 1904 and 1905 (photo 13) looks as though the company was in the business of selling Egyptian artifacts rather than in presenting shows.

The Victorian era in America produced several exotic influences that are readily identifiable and some of them affected the circus. The East was mysterious, easily advertised and readily exploitable. This Egyptian influence was merely the first. It was not the most pervasive as we will hope to show in subsequent articles in this series.



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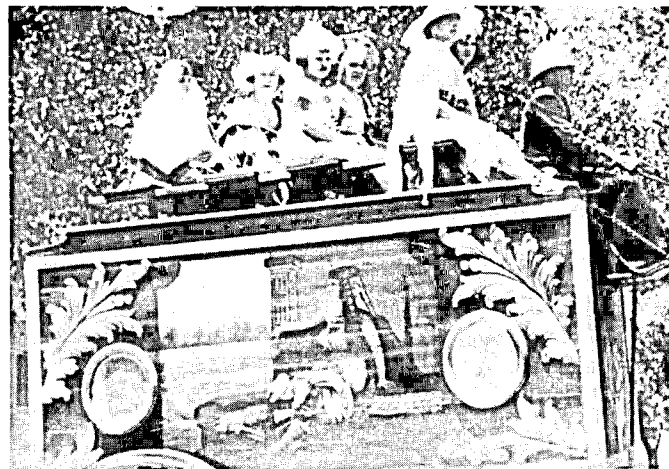
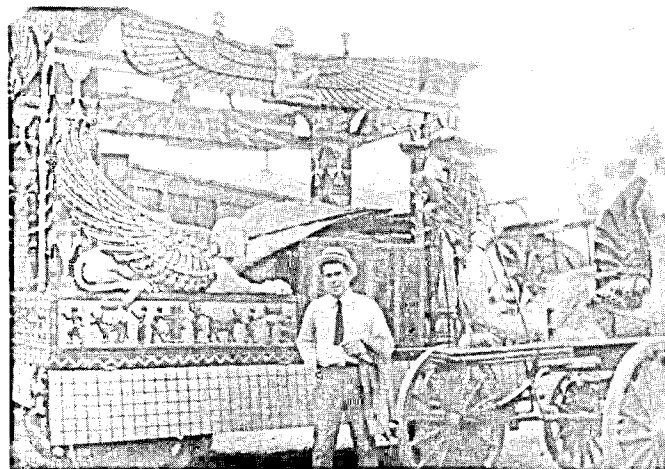
A World Full of Animals by John Hunt (David McKay & Co., New York 1969)
The Great Plains by Walter Prescott Webb (Ginn & Company, New York 1931)
The Gingerbread Age by John Maas (Bramhall House, New York 1957)
The New York Clipper, April 18, 1874

Photo No. 13. The Egyptian influence on the American circus went beyond wagons as is shown in this 1906 Carl Hagenbeck letter head. Fred Pfening Collection.

The Boston Evening Transcript, October 30, 1879

Photo No. 12. Egyptian spec float used on the Ringling-Barnum shows in the late 1920's and early 1930's. This was the last wagon built that carried an Egyptian theme. Woodcock Collection.

Photo No. 11. During the 1920's some smaller shows copied the Egyptian motif from the bigger shows. This 1921 Gentry tableau with Cleopatra painted on the side is a good example. Woodcock Collection.



Mud Show Random Rambles

By Art "Doc" Miller

The recent articles on the Tompkins Wild West Show and the Lincoln Circus prompted me to recall a few mud shows in that area during the teens and twenties.

In 1912 my father purchased an Overland car and for many years we took week end trips in all directions. I was fascinated by the many bright posters plastered on almost every farmer's barn or shed and long before I ever saw a copy of the *Bill-Board*, I was familiar with many show titles.

Around 1912, Al F. Wheeler, or at least a show using his paper, wild catted into Wellsburg, N.Y. It was a very large wagon show, much too large for such a small village, but it managed to draw two full houses by billing down into several Penna hamlets. The big attraction was flying their aeroplane the entire length of the big top. The performance as a whole was OK though short and as a finale they wheeled in the aeroplane with its bicycle wheels and tiny wings. After several starts, the motorcycle engine caught and the goggled aviator raced the affair wide open until the big top was filled with smoke and everyone was coughing and wiping their eyes from the fumes. He then shut it off and the announcer cried out "He can't get it up!" and everyone rushed outside for fresh air.

A few miles east of there and some years previous, the Barnum show had a wreck which demolished several wagons including the ducat wagon. A replacement one was secured the next day in Elmira, by using a bakery wagon. I did not believe this story until I happened to stop in Willawana once and saw some short seat jacks in a barn. The owner told me he didn't know what they were but had been there when he bought the place in 1895.

Al F. Wheeler operated circuses for over thirty years. The first effort for Wheeler was this mud show in 1903. Bradbury Collection.



There is one incident that after I grew up, has always puzzled me as to the location. We were driving on some back road about 1916 and passed a long shed which had many of the siding boards missing. Inside could be plainly seen a number of circus wagons, painted white for parade use. The only thing that remained in my memory was a two wheeled cart with a large bird with outspread wings on it. This could have been on the back road to Corning, or perhaps up around DeRighter which is near Homer, Sig Sautelle's old winter quarters.

I fed and housed an old trouser one winter who had broken into show business on the Sautelle wagon show. He claimed that Mrs. Sautelle never paid the working boys a cent of wages. If they eventually asked for a dollar to go buy shoes with, she'd yell "Why you S.O.B., you ain't earned a dollar." My friend got his spending money by shilling for a spindle operator. I've heard many a tale about how the boys all received a pair of socks or a sack of tobacco on the Christmas tree in quarters, which certainly didn't bankrupt the show if they neglected to pay the working boys any salary. The last time I saw Sig was in 1922 when he worked magic in a ten in One on the M. J. Lapp Shows.

During the early fifties on the King Advance, I stopped off to see George Christy and when I mentioned Elmira, he laughed and remarked that was where he made his first professional appearance with a little side show exhibiting an educated horse in 1914. I inquired if the horse wrote on a slate and rang a fire bell which caused George's jaw to drop with amazement and exclaim, "That was my show." It also happened to be the first side show I ever saw. George added that the following spring he obtained an old forty foot combination RR car and put out a little circus with the trained horse, two monks, a few dogs and a goat. Music was supplied by a hand organ and the show toured the hamlets of Pennsylvania. The

following season it enlarged to two cars.

As a kid, I fell heir to some old circus heralds, which included several for Prof. Mapes Big Tent Show. This was an Elmira based outfit and the posters read "Listen for the Bells and Watch for the horses" then went on to describe the educated ponies and dogs. Another tiny circus which tramped out of there for many years was Dad Backers Show. Even today the oldest residents there will chuckle over Dad's show.

While growing up I had often heard about the big wagon circus that split in Horseheads, each partner taking turns picking out a particular wagon or team etc. Not too many years ago I learned this had been Charles Lee and Sam Scribner, the latter eventually forming the Columbia Burlesque circuit.

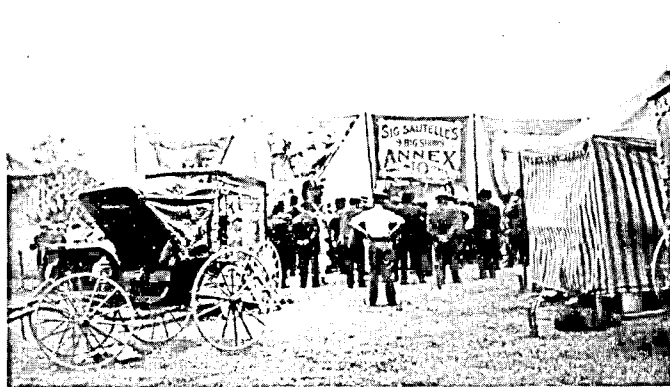
Tom Finn out of Hoosick Falls, N.Y. ran good and bad tent shows for nearly forty years. Some were circus type while others were Tom Shows. Jim Cole was around Tom for years then framed his own tent opry on three wagons which tramped until well in the twenties. Incidentally his daughter who was born on the show is still "with it" and is the well known popular Marsha Maynard.

The Lowery Show was out many years and working boys were plain slaves. Once two of the boys departed, quick-like down the road only to be chased by the owner on horseback, who caught, horsewhipped, and dragged them back to the show.

Pickerings tent show was well known from Georgia to New England and called Elmira home. They too broke in on one of Tom Finn's aggravations, and after their children were old enough, they all became talented performers. After the parents passed away the show was barned in Elmira and destroyed in the famous flood of '46.

A Bob Wing of side show note, framed

Sig Sautelle owned big and small circuses. The midway of his 1911 overland show is pictured here. Pfening Collection.



a circus, - Marlow Bros. in Horseheads in 1926. This neat little show did not last long and was stored in a barn near the later James Strates Horseheads quarters which burned years later. The Marlow show left a real old timer stranded in Elmira and I managed to arrange for him to set up his pit show in Eldridge Park. Al Anderson claimed to have sold a top to John Sparks to start his first circus. He had been with about every show on the road with many seasons spent with Elmer Jones. Al had a trunk full of heralds, tickets etc. from Rhoda Royal show having been with it at the "bust". He had a nice Una Fon which I presume he promoted off Rhodie's outfit. This instrument was used in parades around town for years and eventually ended up at the Fryburg museum, on my tip-off. Bob Wing departed with his pit show and joined Zellmar Bros. Circus.

A few years later, Allen Bros. of Wild West fame, heard about the stored Marlow equipment and picked it up for a song, making nearby Big Flats their home base. This is the only show I ever saw using carbide gas for lights running through garden hose to various parts of the lot and top. Every so often some gilly would stumble over a hose, break the connection causing a dangerous fire. Mert Allen's wife did a roman ring routine but had not practiced before the spring opening. She had also added many pounds to her already plump thighs. She really gave the natives a thrill when she became stuck in the rings, screamed for help, then fainted. Several husky working boys rushed to her rescue, tugged and pulled her free, then shouldered her and trotted out of the ring. Charlie Allen's wife later married Buck Steel. When the depression got into high gear, I became disgusted and sold a string of \$40. side show banners to Allens for \$5.00 each and glad to get it too.

When the Wild West venture became stagnant, Allens went circus for a couple of seasons. They had a very serious accident when the seats all went down and many people were badly injured. Somehow they tore down in a hurry, raced back to Big Flats and hid the show back in the hills. They did not leave funds for feeding the horses and they all starved and froze to death. Allens never returned and a few years later I again got the tent show itch and had heard of some circus stuff stored up there in the hills. I eventually located the seats, ten lengths of 6 high scissor jack blues and four lengths of tailor-made star back reserves. It sounds impossible now but I bought the entire lot for exactly \$7.00.

About the same time, Ray Brison, Sam Dock's son-in-law learned of an outfit stored in a tobacco shed at Tioga Junction Pa. Ray got the 30x50 ft. top, poles, stakes and seats for \$20.00 which happened to be the storage, long past due.

For a decade or more, the Tex Ella Wild West Show played all through New York and Penna. This was a family affair with big husky tobacco chewing Ella, the boss.



Sort of Rose Killian the 2nd. Ella had a sharp looking daughter or two and this solved the working boy problem. They always had a passel of fellows joining out, just to spark the gals. Ella used nice litho paper from Donaldson and a flashy herald with enough un-schooled copy to make a hog laugh. She loved the slogan "See them rope and ride them horses!" and this appeared on the trucks and all advertising copy. The main feature of the show was the sudden appearance of the old long horned steer racing through the big top. The last time I caught her show, she went

The Tex Ella's Wild West Tent Show of 1940 played through New York state. Pfening Collection.

into detail of how she had to switch lots in a town and ended up playing on a fellows lawn. Although the yard held two six foot fruit trees and an outdoor privie, it didn't faze her a bit. She had the boys erect the top over the trees and donaker. Pausing to spit, Ella laughed and said "Wouldn't you know it, that donaker stunk up the top so bad, we couldn't make the candy pitch."

Circus World Museum Newsletter Notes

The Museum has provided on a loan basis to the Ringling-Barnum Circus a set of 25 lithographs that they have had specially framed and will be sending around the country as a promotional display. Programs of both the Red and Blue units of the show again carry full page color advertisements on the Museum.

A new color film of the Circus World Museum has been produced and is available to school groups, church and civic clubs.

A major collection of movie film, photo negatives and other material owned by the late Tom Scaperlanda, of San Antonio, Texas, was willed to and has been received by the Museum. All of this material is now available for research.

In August of 1971 a truck loaded with 6 tons of archives was received from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. This vast collection of official papers, files and daily record books covers all of the circuses they have owned. These archives will be kept in the Museum Library under a special agreement for a 15 year period during which time the material will be held under a very restricted use.

The American Association of Museums has accredited the Museum as one of the initial 21 museums to be so recognized. This came after a rigorous professional examination and personal inspection by a four man team.

The Western Iron Stores, hardware jobbers in Milwaukee donated \$2,000 worth of bolts and other hardware to the Mu-

seum. This material will be of great value in the restoration of wagons.

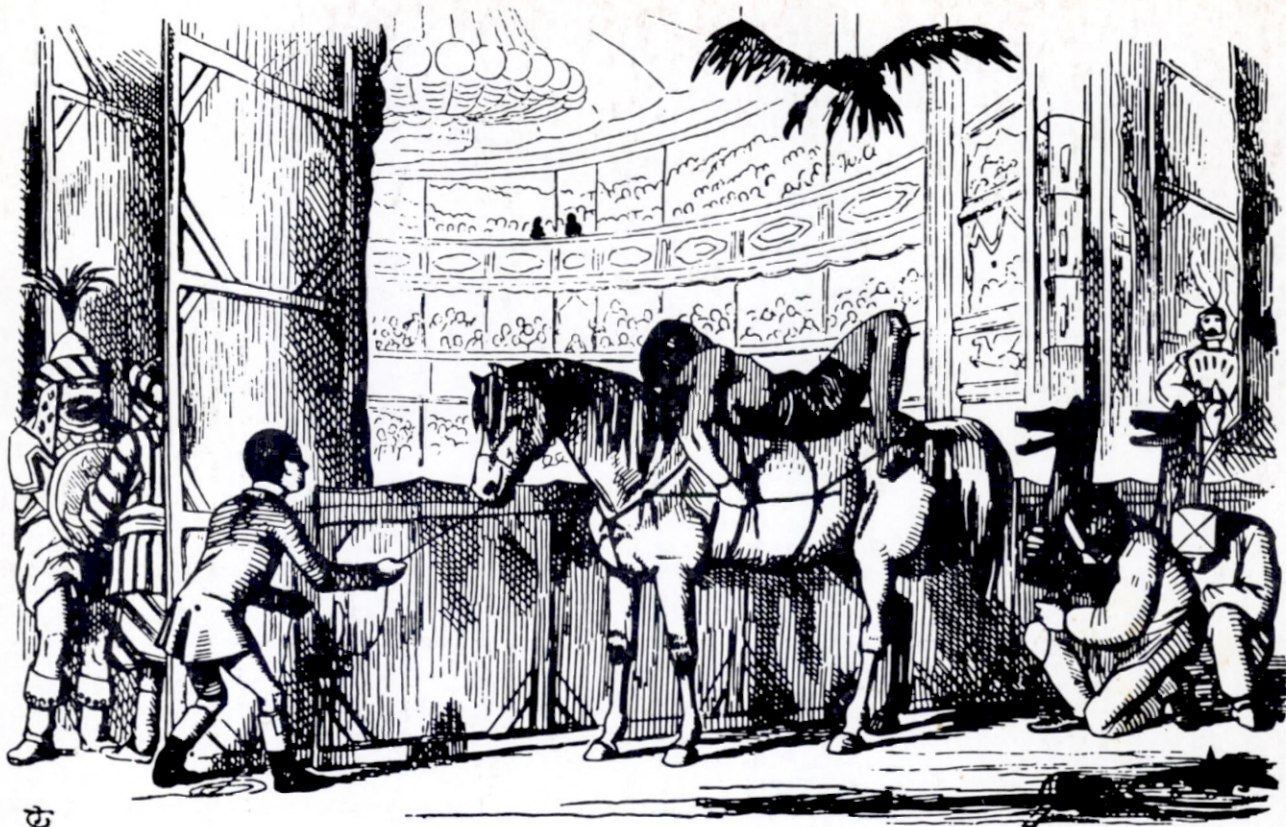
Lloyd Hilligoss, operator of the largest carnival on the west coast has contributed equipment from the Foley and Burk railroad carnival to the Museum. Included were 2 fine baggage wagons, a very old and rare fun house completely built into a wagon that was built by the Spillman Co. 60 years ago. This wagon carried gasoline, lubricating equipment and tools. The wagon will be used during the Milwaukee parade in 1972.

In November two flat cars arrived from California carrying the wagons from the Foley and Burt shows as well as two baggage wagons donated by R. L. Ridley, of Santa Rosa, California.

Dick Sparrow, of Zeoring, Iowa, is developing and driving a 40 horse team for the 1972 parade. By spring he will have 40 horses plus 6 or 8 spares that will be matched for color, temperment and size. They will pull the Columbia bandwagon in the parade.

The wagon shop was busy during the winter. The Columbia bandwagon has been completely rebuilt. A 20 foot wagon from the Royal American Shows has been rebuilt and will be used as an electrical shop. The Royal Italian Circus Bandwagon from the Fossets has also been restored.

A program has been developed wherein the Museum is having prints made of each of the thousands of negatives in the Museum files. These prints will be keyed and numbered and placed in albums in a permanent fashion, then filed by circus. This will enable visiting historians and researchers to quickly see what is in the files.



6

Enter Foot and Horse

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"Mr. Saxon . . . is to be congratulated. His **Enter Foot and Horse** is an authoritative work on an unusual form of entertainment in theatre history. Supplemented by black-and-white illustrations, many of which have never before been published, the book is a valuable addition to 19th-century theatre annals." — *American Notes and Queries*.

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